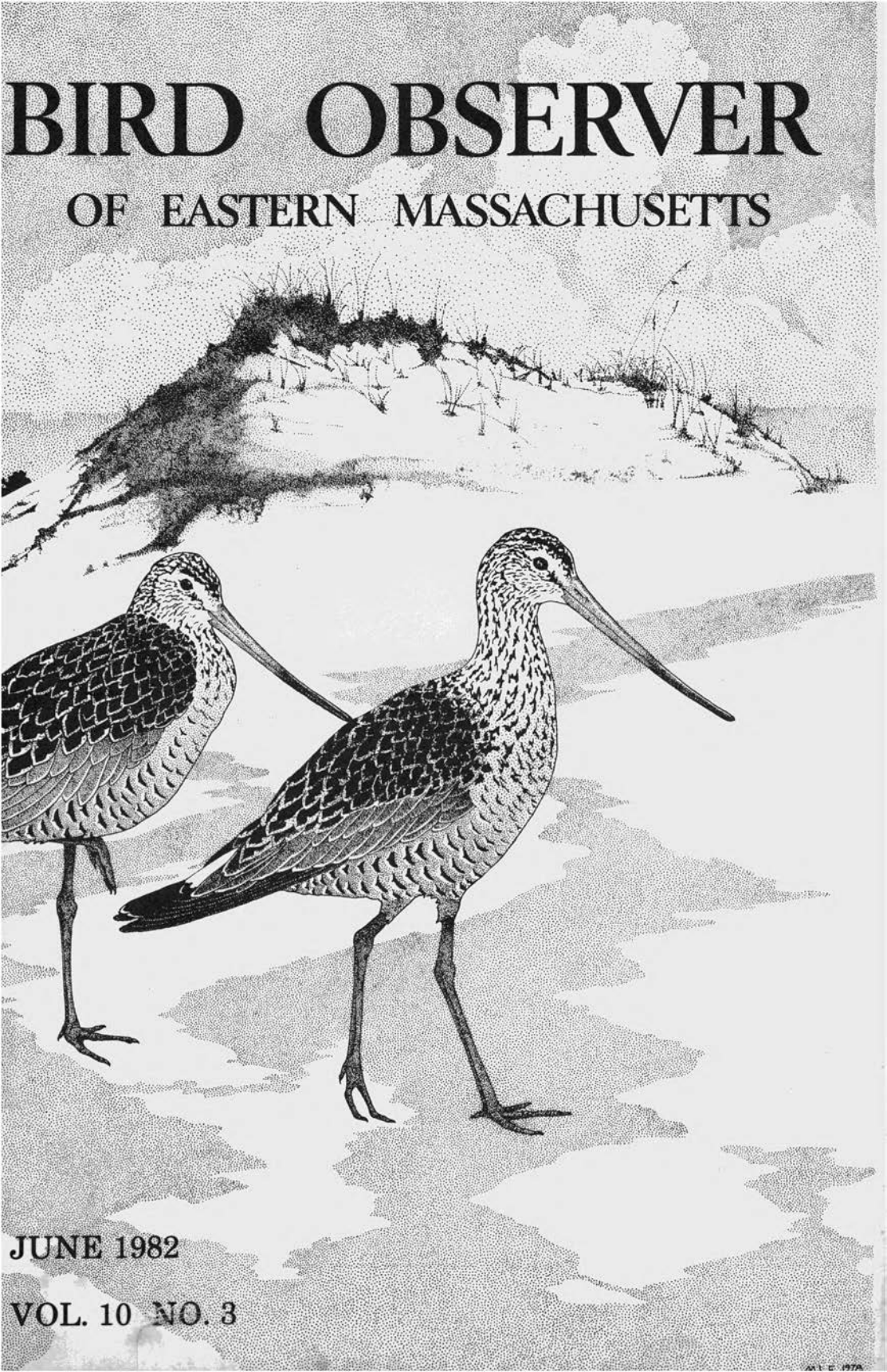
BIRD OBSERVER

OF EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS



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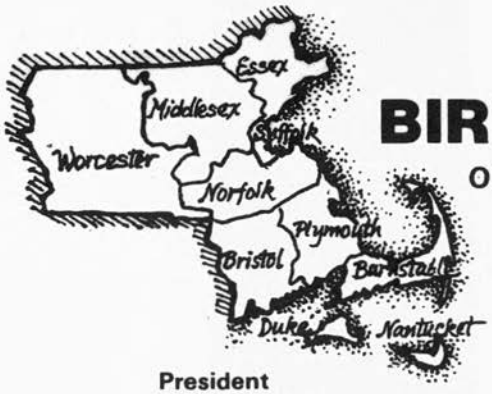

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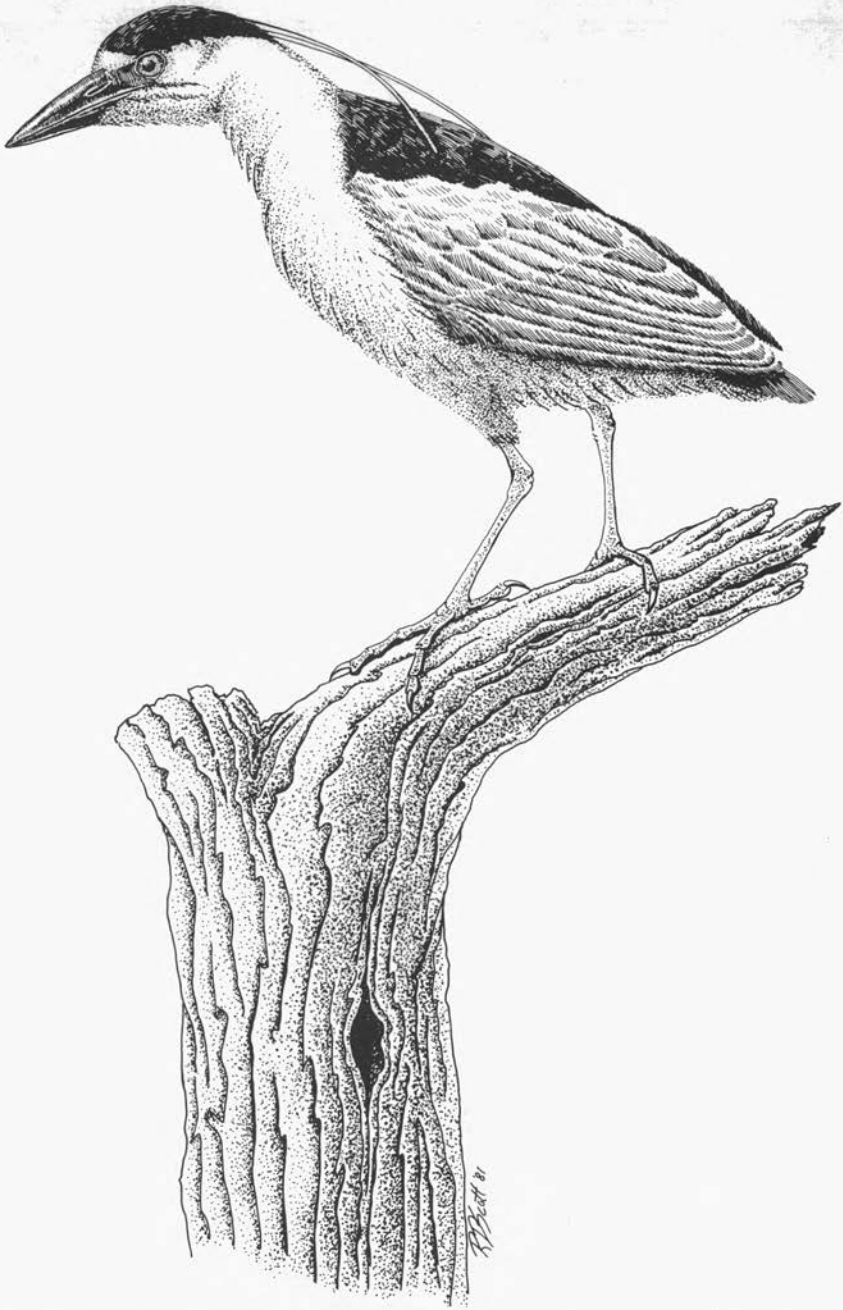
WILDLIFE OBSERVATION PERMIT FOR NORTH MONOMOY ISLAND

Visits to the North Island of Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge will be regulated this year to prevent disturbance of tern nesting areas and gull management and population research activities. The permit period will extend from March to August. Individuals and groups planning to visit the North Island area during this period may obtain the required permit from the Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge, Morris Island, Chatham, telephone 945-0594.

Access by permit only during this period of time is neccessary to inform visitors of designated landing areas and access routes which will not disrupt the nesting birds or wildlife management program.



Black-crowned Night Heron

Illustration by Ralph Scott

MASSACHUSETTS WADERS: PAST AND PRESENT

by Wayne R. Petersen, Whitman

The first-time visitor to a major wader location in south Florida, such as Lake Okeechobee or the Everglades National Park, is instantly struck by the lavish abundance of herons, egrets, spoonbills, ibises, and storks. At certain seasons, the density of these lovely birds at feeding areas or rookeries makes an awesome spectacle which ranks as one of North America's leading ornithological attractions. However, this was not always the case. During the heyday of the plume trade in the 1800s, many species of herons and egrets were brought to the brink of extinction as a result of the avaricious use of their aigrettes by the millinery industry. Largely in an effort to save these species as a living legacy, the National Audubon Society was founded in 1905. Since that time, many of these herons and egrets have undergone a series of population fluctuations. Most recently, there have been dramatic population increases and range expansions for a number of species. Many of these recent changes have been reflected in the avifauna of Massachusetts.

At present, the order Ciconiiformes is represented in Massachusetts by eleven members of the family Ardeidae (herons and bitterns) and by one member of the family Threskiornithidae (ibises and spoonbills). These numbers apply only to the breeding species and do not include those species which have occurred as vagrants. Early in this century, Howe and Allen (1901) and Forbush (1925) listed only four species of breeding herons in their works on Massachusetts birdlife. By the middle of the century, Griscom and Snyder (1955) documented the breeding of seven species in the Commonwealth. Thus, in a period of less than a century, the number of breeding species of herons, egrets, and ibises in Massachusetts has increased by more than 100 per cent.

The colonial breeding of a number of Ciconiiformes was historically a reason for their vulnerability during the peak of their persecution and slaughter in the latter part of the 1800s. Today, this same colonial habit has considerably facilitated the documentation of their population and range expansion. The locating of local rookeries and the careful monitoring of the numbers and productivity of breeding pairs have allowed the populations of these birds to be estimated with a precision not readily possible for most non-colonial bird species. It should also be emphasized, however, that colonial breeding continues to expose these populations to threats. Not only are these major wader rookeries highly vulnerable to natural predation, but they are also in constant jeopardy of disturbance through human encroachment. Highly sensitive to indiscreet colony visitation at critical periods in the nesting cycle, all waders also face the threat of competitive use of feeding areas, many of which are heavily

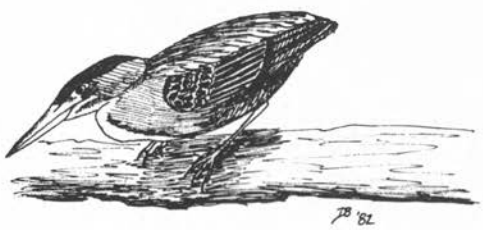
used by the human population. As coastal and interior wetlands are drained, contaminated, or otherwise abused, they become unacceptable to the long-legged wading birds. Thus, while human conscience saved many species from extinction a century ago, continued vigilance is required if we are to maintain healthy populations in the future, both locally and on a more global front.

In the balance of this article, the general status, both past and present, of each species of heron, egret, or ibis presently breeding in Massachusetts is described. Specific details on rookery locations and population counts are often omitted for obvious reasons. However, for the observer wishing to see a number of the colonial heron species, it is not necessary to visit breeding localities to make observations. In fact, some of the more visually spectacular concentrations of waders occur in late summer, well away from the breeding areas (see "Where to Find Herons" in this issue).

Species Accounts

Great Blue Heron (Ardea herodias). The Great Blue is perhaps the most generally familiar of all the heron species occurring in the state. While it is most common on the coast, it occurs with frequency in every county in Massachusetts. However, it has always been a rare to casual breeder in this state, and today there are fewer than ten known rookeries in the Commonwealth. Unlike its many gregarious relatives, it prefers to breed in isolated and homogeneous colonies, frequently numbering between five and fifty pairs per locality. It usually prefers to nest in secluded wooded swamps in central and western Massachusetts, and old beaver ponds seem to be a boon to its local success. Undoubtedly, scattered pairs breed periodically in undisturbed wetlands in eastern Massachusetts, but the most important colonies today exist in Westboro, Phillipston, Wendell, Otis, Townsend, and until recently, Sheffield. Many colonies are continually in danger of being vandalized, and at least one recent colony is now defunct as a result of development. The Great Blue Heron has always had a perilous coexistence with mankind, regarded by some men as a fishing competitor and by others as an ideal rifle target.

Green Heron (Butorides virescens). Like the Great Blue Heron, the Green Heron is widely distributed throughout Massachusetts and it is a potential breeding resident anywhere that water



exists. Much commoner than the Great Blue as a breeder, the Green Heron typically nests alone or in very loose colonies. Nests are often some distance from water and are usually high in a tree in an inaccessible location. The species also breeds regularly in dense coastal thickets, from which it ventures to nearby tidal marshes to find food for its young.

Little Blue Heron (Florida caerulea). The Little Blue Heron represents an interesting success story. Hagar (1941) first recorded nesting in Massachusetts in Marshfield in 1940 and 1941. However, a viable breeding population was not established until the mid 1970s. As with a number of the "southern" herons, its prior status involved mid-to-late summer and fall appearances following the nesting season in the south. By 1977, the Little Blue Heron was nesting at four coastal locations: Westport, Cotuit, Manchester, and Plymouth (Erwin, 1979). These colonies totaled an estimated nineteen pairs of birds. Since that time, no new colonies are known to have been formed. However, there has apparently been a recent (1982) shift in the location of the Manchester rookery from House Island to nearby Kettle and Eagle Islands. Whether the rookery population of Little Blue Herons has participated in this shift is unknown at present.

Cattle Egret (Bubulcus ibis). The extraordinary history of the Cattle Egrets' colonization of the New World from Africa is now a matter of record (see Hancock and Elliott, 1978). The species first reached North America from Central and South America about 1950, and the first specimen for the United States was obtained at Wayland, Massachusetts, on April 23, 1952 (Griscom and Snyder, 1955). Since that vanguard, the species has enjoyed such a meteoric expansion throughout much of the United States and parts of Canada that there is now concern about its possible impact on native breeding species. Cattle Egrets appear in mid-April and then disappear until late summer or fall, but they are known to have nested in the state during several summers. The species was first found breeding in 1974 at Manchester, and a few pairs have since been known to breed at Plymouth, and most recently, at Salem (1982). Erwin's 1977 census (Erwin, 1979) found a total of ten pairs at the Manchester location. It is doubtful whether the state's present breeding population is much in excess of this.

Great Egret (Casmerodius albus). The Great Egret had a history of being a regular summer and fall post-breeding wanderer in Massachusetts, in moderate numbers until about 1920, and occasionally in great flights thereafter, as in 1921 and 1948 (Cottrell, 1949). Then in 1954, it nested in the state for the first time at South Hanson (Griscom and Snyder, 1955). The first coastal nesting occurred in 1956 at Manchester (Erwin, 1979). By 1977, the species was recorded breeding at three locations: Manchester, Plymouth, and Cotuit. In 1981, the author noted a Great Egret carrying nesting material into

the heronry on Spectacle Island in Boston Harbor, suggesting probable breeding at that location as well. There is also good reason to believe that the species has nested, or still does nest, at Westport and possibly at Monomoy. At the present time, there are probably not more than fifteen pairs breeding in the major Massachusetts rookeries.

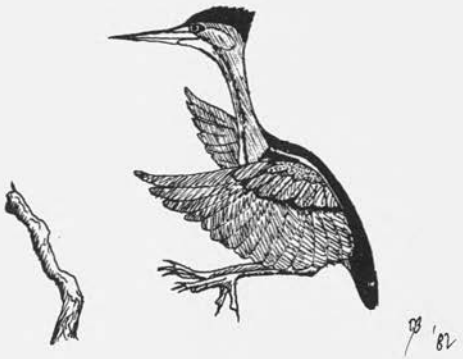
Snowy Egret (Egretta thula). Forbush (1925) called the Snowy Egret an accidental visitor in Massachusetts, and Griscom and Snyder (1955) reported only six birds in the state between 1926 and 1947. From 1950 on, concurrently with the species' recovery and re-establishment as a breeder in the South and in the Mid-Atlantic States, gradually increasing numbers of Snowys began to be reported, primarily at coastal locations. Quite a success story, the Snowy Egret appears to have eclipsed its former abundance prior to its decimation during the years of the plume trade. Hill (1965) records its first breeding in Massachusetts in East Dennis in 1955, followed by annual breeding at Martha's Vineyard beginning in 1962 (Keith and Chalif, 1968). Since those early records, the Snowy Egret has proliferated to the point that it now is one of the most abundant breeding waders in the state. Erwin (1979) indicated that breeding was occurring in a dozen different areas in 1977, with all colonies being located on offshore coastal islands. During the past decade, colonies at Manchester, Boston Harbor, Plymouth, and Martha's Vineyard have been the most numerically significant. For instance, in 1977, Erwin (1979) indicated that 220 pairs were breeding at House Island, Manchester, while in 1978, 231 active nests were counted at Clark's Island, Plymouth (Davis et al., 1979). As with a number of other heron species, impressive counts of hundreds of birds are now a regular late summer feature at evening roosts at the Parker River Refuge (Plum Island) in Essex County, and the species has become a familiar summer sight in tidewater areas throughout Massachusetts.

Louisiana Heron (Hydranassa tricolor). Unlisted by Forbush in 1925, the Louisiana Heron was not even recorded in Massachusetts until 1940 (Allen, 1941). Since that time, it has slowly become increasingly frequent, and for the past ten to fifteen years, it has become of annual occurrence during the period between April and early October. In 1976 it reached its northern breeding limit when three pairs with young were recorded in Manchester (Forster, 1976). The following year, Erwin (1979) listed one pair at the same location. Since those two years, no breeding confirmations have been made in the state, although the author observed up to four birds entering the rookery at Plymouth in May 1973.

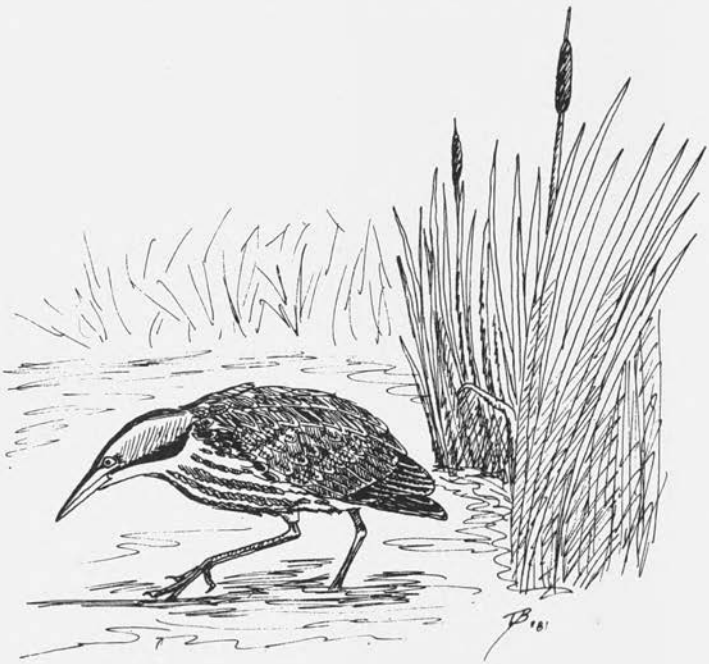
Black-crowned Night Heron (Nycticorax nycticorax). The night heron ranks as one of the traditionally common waders in the state. Never as eagerly sought by the plume hunters as the gaudy egrets, the species was spared the near demise that plagued many of the other wader species. In 1920, Alfred O. Gross counted 2536 nests in one historically famous rookery in Barnstable (Gross, 1923). The night heron did, however, fall tragic victim to the contamination resulting from the widespread use of hard pesticides during the 1950's and 1960's. While never totally decimated, it did suffer a severe population crash for nearly a decade and a half. With the ban on the polychlorinated hydrocarbons, it is now quickly returning as a locally common coastal breeder with several colonies numbering into the hundreds of pairs. There are approximately fifteen to twenty major coastal rookeries at this time. In addition, it breeds inland in various small colonies, often numbering only a few pairs, and most frequently occurring in southeastern Massachusetts. It is decidedly uncommon in interior and western regions of the state.

Yellow-crowned Night Heron (Nyctanassa violacea). Unlike the Black-crown, the Yellow-crowned Night Heron is a rare and inconspicuous breeder in Massachusetts. Always considered a rarity in the state, it has become of annual occurrence in small numbers since 1940, with the majority of records involving immature birds in summer or early fall. While coastal breeding today is probably annual, its nocturnal and solitary habits make it difficult to confirm. The species first nested in Ipswich in 1928 (Griscom and Snyder, 1955), and since that time it has bred irregularly at Marshfield and at several locations on Cape Cod. Recent continued presence of adults and immatures in summer at Parker River Refuge, Westport, and Martha's Vineyard suggest possible occasional breeding locations in those localities as well. It should be emphasized when considering this species that it is at the northern limit of its breeding range in Massachusetts.

Least Bittern (Ixobrychus exilis). The Least Bittern is undoubtedly the most secretive and un-heronlike of all the Ciconiiformes occurring in Massachusetts. Usually choosing extensive marshes overgrown with cattails and buttonbush



(Cephalanthus) for breeding, the species behaves more like a rail than a heron. Like the rails also, its soft crepuscular breeding calls are often the only clues to its presence. While always an historical breeder in the Commonwealth, its precise status remains indefinite because of the problems involved in confirming breeding. During the six years of the Massachusetts Breeding Bird Atlas Project (1974-1979), only four nesting confirmations were established, all in the eastern half of the state. No summer records at all were made west of eastern Worcester County during that same time period, although Griscom and Snyder (1955) record early breed-



ing stations at Longmeadow and at two Berkshire locations. Clearly, the species is overlooked in Massachusetts. However, it is unlikely that it is common anywhere in the state. With the continued deterioration of suitable nesting habitat, its steady decline is inevitable.

American Bittern (Botaurus lentiginosus). Like its tiny relative, the American Bittern is a non-colonial freshwater marsh nester that has a long history of breeding in the state. Both Forbush (1925) and Griscom and Snyder (1955) described it as a common summer resident in appropriate marshy habitat throughout the state. However, while still widespread as a breeder, it faces the same pressure from habitat destruction that all of our marsh birds face. In six years, the Massachusetts Breeding Bird Atlas Project confirmed fourteen nesting locations scattered throughout Massachusetts. As with the Least Bittern, its telltale early spring "pumping" is often the best clue to its presence in an area.

Glossy Ibis (Plegadis falcinellus). The Glossy Ibis was formerly a southern vagrant, first being collected in Massachusetts in 1850, and then recorded only very rarely until 1947, from which time on it has appeared annually. Until the early 1970's the species was most prevalent as an April and May casual visitor, with a few individuals appearing during the summer, probably as part of post-breeding dispersal from the south. In 1974, the Glossy Ibis was first confirmed breeding in the state at Plymouth, and since that time the species has been found breeding in at least two additional coastal rookeries, one at Manchester and one or two in Boston Harbor. As indications of the success of the species, the Plymouth colony had 40 pairs in 1975 (Harrington, 1975) and the Manchester colony had 107 pairs in 1977 (Erwin, 1979). Despite these figures, there seems to be no real increase in any of the presently existing colonies in terms of total breeding pairs. In fact, there may actually be a slight decline in progress in at least one colony. No obvious explanation for this is apparent at the moment.

The author wishes to acknowledge assistance provided by Richard A. Forster of the Massachusetts Audubon Society for making available unpublished data obtained during the Massachusetts Breeding Bird Atlas Project as well as for offering other helpful suggestions during the preparation of this article.

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DENISE BRAUNHARDT, M.S. in wildlife biology from University of Massachusetts, is a free-lance illustrator, writer, and wildlife photographer. She is a 4H agent for Suffolk County.

WHERE TO FIND HERONS

by Bird Observer Staff

The coastal and inland wetlands of eastern Massachusetts are the haunts of a variety of herons and heron-watchers. Everyone has a favorite place for observing these birds, so beautifully adapted for a predatory life in fields and marshes. As with many kinds of colonial-nesting birds, casual visits to the nesting colony can have disastrous effects on the eggs or young and are therefore to be discouraged. But there are some sites in this state which afford excellent opportunities for the heron-watcher. A few of these selected sites are described below by members of BOEM staff.

Plum Island

Parker River National Wildlife Refuge on Plum Island is one of the best places in the state to see nearly all of the herons which occur in Massachusetts. The best time to find maximum numbers of these herons is at high tide when they are forced up out of the marshes, such as the marsh just south of Old Pines. In milder winters, Great Blue Herons, Black-crowned Night Herons, and an occasional American Bittern will overwinter. Early spring arrivals include Snowy Egret and Glossy Ibis, soon to be joined by Great Egret, Louisiana Heron and Little Blue Heron. During the summer, herons can be seen feeding in the Salt Pans, the marsh behind the field across from the New Pines, the impoundments at Hellcat Swamp, the pools just south of Cross Farm Hill, and Stage Island Pool. Least Bitterns can be seen, if one is patient, in the cattail marshes at Hellcat and Stage Island Pool, particularly in July when they are feeding young. The best vantage point for seeing these birds is the tower at Stage Island. Green Herons will be seen flying about anywhere on the island during spring and summer and can be found feeding along the edges of any water bodies such as the small pond at the Warden's.

Fall, mid-August to late September, is the most spectacular time to see the herons as the young have fledged and the herons congregate in the marshy areas to feed. Late in the evening around sunset, the Snowys, Little Blues, Greats, Louisianas and Glossy Ibis fly to favored night roosts where they tend to concentrate in numbers up to 1000. In the last few years they have used Stage Island Pool for roosting; in other years they have used the cattail marsh in the north impoundment at Hellcat. Their flight down the island and concentration in one area provide the observer with a good opportunity to see all of these birds together and in good numbers, e.g., 400-1000 Snowys, 8-16 Greats, 10-40 Great Blues (mostly immatures), and 50-100 Glossy Ibis. Immature Little Blues can be readily discerned by the lack of yellow at the base of the bill and around the eyes, the pale blue bill with a dark tip, and the pale legs.

Directions: Follow Water Street in Newburyport to the Plum Island Bridge; take a right after the bridge and proceed down the refuge road. The observation tower at Stage Island Pool is accessible from parking lot #6. (See BOEM, December, 1978, and June, 1979, "The Four Seasons at Plum Island," Parts I and II.)

Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge, Concord

At the refuge impoundment off Monsen Road in Concord, the breeding species of herons are the Green Heron, the American Bittern, and the Least Bittern. Records of Least Bittern have been irregular over the last ten years, but the species was present during the summers of 1980 and 1981. In 1981, at least two individuals, male and female, were seen regularly along the dike between the two pools, and one or more immature birds were observed. Post-breeding herons start to arrive around mid-July. The population of Great Blue Herons peaks in early fall (September or October), with possible counts of 20 or more. The population of Black-crowned Night Herons peaks in late August, with counts of 20 or more likely; these usually depart by mid-September. The night herons are most evident during their noisy dusk flights. Post-breeding Snowy Egrets and Great Egrets also occur in small numbers. Both Great Blue Heron and American Bittern (rarely) can be present at the refuge through late fall and into winter, as evidenced by Concord Christmas Bird Count records.

Directions: Follow Route 62 east from Concord Center to Monsen Road, a left marked by a small sign. (See BOEM, September-October, 1973, "Autumn Birding at Great Meadows," by Peter Alden.)

Belle Isle Marsh, East Boston

Belle Isle is one of the most accessible places in the Greater Boston area from which to watch a variety of herons. By mid-April numbers of Black-crowned Night Herons, Snowy Egrets, and Glossy Ibises begin utilizing the marsh for feeding and resting. The Snowys feed primarily in the pools behind the New England Casket Company and at the far end of the MDC Park; at low tide they might be found in the creeks and ditches or in Belle Isle Inlet. Glossy Ibises and night herons are dispersed more randomly; night herons often roost in the cottonwoods east of the Casket Company or in the thick Phragmites across from the Suffolk Downs Racetrack.

At this time, American Bitterns and Great Blue Herons in ones and twos also appear in migration to inland breeding grounds. Other herons such as Great Egret, Little Blue Heron and Louisiana Heron may show up; presumably these nest with the Snowys on some of the island colonies in Massachusetts Bay. Finally, Green Herons are seen frequently in the marsh throughout spring and summer which leads to the speculation

that they breed in swampy thickets within a few miles of Belle Isle.

Mid-summer is the time to begin watching the dawn heron flights. Adult and young Snowy Egrets from the Spectacle Island heron colony roost on the island at night and disperse to various marshes and tidal creeks of the city by day to feed. When high tide coincides with dawn the birds need to travel rather long distances to the upper reaches of marsh creeks where the water is shallow enough for them to feed. Those that choose to come to the northern sector of the city to feed in the marshes of Chelsea, Medford, Somerville, Saugus, and Revere, fly in dense flocks to Belle Isle, then disperse radially to these other locations. Dawn flights in late August of 1981 totalled nearly 250 birds of which the vast majority were Snowys although four Great Egrets were also recorded in these flocks.

Take a Second Look (TASL) is organizing a series of dawn censuses of Boston Harbor herons for the 1982 season. Anyone interested in this project should contact the coordinator: Soheil Zendeh, 380 Broadway, Somerville 02145 (628-8990).

Directions: From Bennington Street in East Boston turn southeast on Leverett Street; then take a right on Lawn Avenue and park near the marsh pool on the left. Or park at Belle Isle Reservation entrance on Bennington Street just south of the Revere city line, and walk to the back of the reservation to look over the marsh pools there. (See BOEM, December, 1976, "Revere-Winthrop Revisited," by Soheil Zendeh.)

Hemenway Landing, Eastham

The great marsh at Nauset in Eastham is a fine place to watch herons on Cape Cod. From Fort Hill and other lookouts atop the bluff one can often see a variety of these waders flying about or stalking prey in the marsh below. A daily event of particular note from mid-July on is the evening heron flight, best observed from Hemenway Landing, just north of the Fort Hill area. About an hour before sunset the diurnal herons begin flying from the marsh overhead and into the trees and tangles behind the landing, where they roost for the night. As many as 25 to 30 Snowy Egrets and 80 to 100 Green Herons, as well as lesser numbers of other species are involved in this flight. As dusk approaches the night herons stage a reverse flight; their "quoking" shapes can be seen and heard flying into the marsh until the last glimmer of light fades from the cape sky. High counts of 70 to 80 Black-crowned and 4 Yellow-crowned Night Herons are possible.

Directions: About one quarter-mile north of Fort Hill on Route 6 in Eastham turn right on Hemenway Landing Road. (See BOEM, October, 1979, "Birding Orleans and Eastham," by Robert Prescott.)

Snowy Egret *Photo by David C. Twichell*

THE CLARK'S ISLAND HERONRY

by William E. Davis, Jr., Foxboro
and Katharine C. Parsons, Sandwich

Massachusetts' largest mixed-species heronry and one of the most productive Ardeid colonies on the east coast is located on Clark's Island, perched off the west end of Saquish Point in Duxbury Bay. The 80-acre island was visited by the Pilgrims on their way from Provincetown to Plymouth and has served as an Indian prison camp and leper colony. Today, a dozen or so cottages offer a unique summer retreat to island residents. Farmed for more than a century, the island is now largely covered with second-growth cedars and thickets. In spring and summer, the north end supports a sizable gull colony in addition to over 500 nesting pairs of waders.

The herony was discovered in 1974 as a result of some fine ornithological sleuthing by Wayne Petersen. For years local residents in the Duxbury area had noticed an increase in the number of egrets, herons, and Glossy Ibises, but it was not until 1973 that Petersen brought his suspicions to the attention of the Manomet Bird Observatory. In the spring and summer of 1973 he observed evening flights of herons, ibis, and egrets over Dwyer Farm in Marshfield. He systematically tracked the birds south until, from near the Myles Standish Monument, he watched egrets disappear among the gulls on Clark's Island. From studying flight lines and topographic maps and from the careful counting of bird numbers, it seemed very probable that Clark's Island was the location of a major heronry. Petersen suggested this to Kathleen Anderson and on July 13, 1974, Petersen, Anderson, and Brian Harrington embarked on an early morning field trip to Clark's Island. In less than two hours and with the aid of island resident, Clinton Watson, the group located an estimated 5 pairs of Little Blue Herons, 2 pairs of Great Egrets, 30+ pairs of Snowy Egrets, 4 to 6 pairs of Glossy Ibis, and over 100 Black-crowned Night Heron pairs. Nests and young of each species were located, confirming the first breeding record for Glossy Ibis in Massachusetts. Watson reported that Snowy Egrets had been on the island since 1970, establishing the origin of the heronry no later than the late 1960s. The study of the Clark's Island heronry was underway.

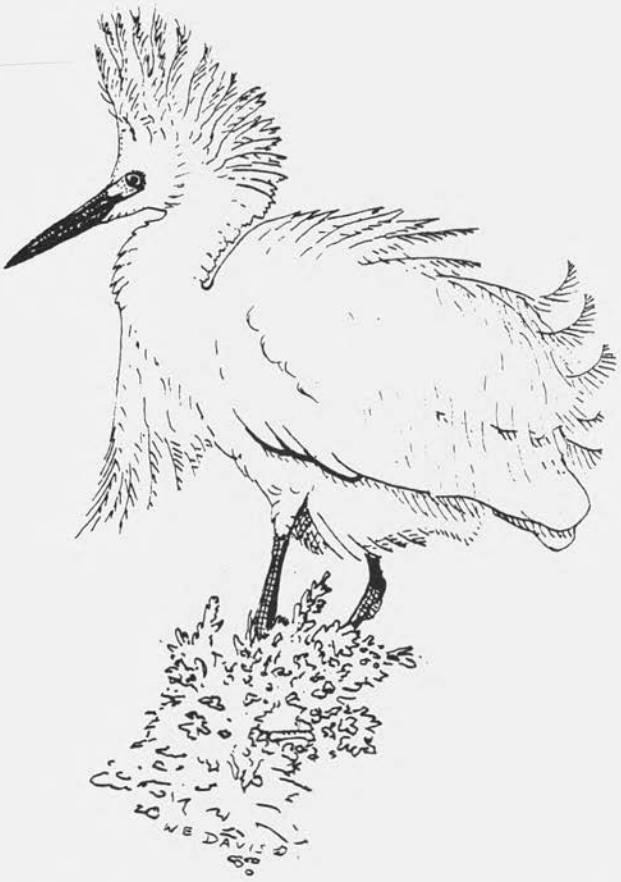
Herons are good subjects for ecological research because they are colonial breeders, making it relatively easy to observe large populations from which to measure productivity. In addition, fish-eating Ardeids occupy a top position in the food chain and have proved to be sensitive indicators of estuarine quality. Hence, Clark's Island has received much attention from researchers at government agencies as well as from staff and interns at the Manomet Bird Observatory (MBO).

In 1975 Brian Harrington and Kerry Elkin, working under a U.S.

Fish and Wildlife Service contract, began the arduous tasks of climbing cedar and cherry trees, tagging nests, and marking, measuring, and weighing eggs. Each nest was labeled with a numbered tape and each egg lettered with a permanent marker. Young were checked usually through the tenth day, after which most heron chicks are able to scramble from the nest and climb to the top of the tree when approached. At this point, the upper canopy of the heronry is dotted with small herons waiting to deposit half-digested fish on a tree-climbing biologist. MBO personnel and other investigators have continued to collect nesting data, making this one of the most extensive and long-term heronry studies to date. In addition, the heronry at Clark's Island is the northern-most colony on the Atlantic coast to undergo such detailed investigation.

Several investigators have published results from studies conducted at Clark's Island. Organochlorine poisoning has been assessed in Black-crowned Night Herons (Ohlendorf 1977), and several authors have included census data from Clark's Island in regional atlases of breeding bird colonies (Osborn and Custer 1978, Erwin 1979). Other studies of Clark's Island birds include ecological investigations of nest-site and colony-site selection (Erwin 1977, Beaver et al, 1980), a study of heron vocalizations (Davis 1979), and an analysis of gull hatching success (Parsons 1981).

Many investigations are still in progress. Early morning and late afternoon flight lines are being mapped to help identify areas within the Plymouth-Duxbury estuary that are heavily used by herons as food resources. In 1980, William E. (Ted) Davis began an experimental study of wader nesting patterns in red cedars. Old nests that had survived the winter were removed from a sample of nest-trees. A similar number of control nest-trees were selected in which old nests were not disturbed. Nest building and occupancy by Snowy Egrets, Black-crowned Night Herons,and Glossy Ibis were monitored weekly. This data is being analyzed to determine if the presence of old nests affects nest-site selection by Clark's Island waders. Kathy Parsons, a former MBO intern, has been studying the effects of weather on Black-crowned Night Herons and Snowy Egrets as part of her doctoral research. Wader productivity in most southern heronries is limited by biological factors such as predators, parasites, and competitors. Preliminary evidence from Clark's Island suggests that herons nesting in the north might be limited by their physical environment. The diversity of projects completed and in progress is evidence of the wealth of research opportunities available in a large, mixed-species colony.



Although the large size of the colony prevents marking and following each heron nest, the entire colony has been censused during the first two weeks of June on five occasions, four of which have been previously reported (Harrington, 1975; Davis et al., 1979; Davis, 1980). Census data from 1981 and previous counts are presented in Table 1.

The principal nesters at Clark's Island are Black-crowned Night Herons and Snowy Egrets; their numbers have remained greater than any of the other nesting species since 1975. Glossy Ibis were first found nesting in Massachusetts on Clark's Island in 1974. Since then, their numbers have fluctuated considerably with the fewest pairs nesting in 1981. Great Egrets and Little Blue Herons nest in small and somewhat variable numbers on Clark's Island. The Cattle Egret is known to have nested there in 1977 (Harrington and K. Parsons, personal communication), and possibly 1978, but its colonization of the area seems tenuous at best.

The large and stable numbers of Black-crowned Night Herons and Snowy Egrets form the bulk of the heronry at Clark's Island. The number of Snowy Egrets has consistently increased relative to black-crowns from the first census in 1975 through 1980. The decrease in Snowy Egret pairs this past year reflects a recent reduction in snowy numbers in many Massachusetts' heronries (R. Forster, personal communication).

Table 1. Active Wader Nests at Clark's Island

	BNHE	SNEG	GREG	CAEG	LBHE	GLIB	TOTAL
1975	350	150	5	0	5	40	550
1976	245	244	5	0	3	60	557
1978	200	231	10	1?	1	20	463
1979	254	264	10	0	2	31	561
1981	226	222	2	0	4	15	469

BNHE - Black-crowned Night Heron
SNEG - Snowy Egret
GREG - Great Egret
CAEG - Cattle Egret
LBHE - Little Blue Heron
GLIB - Glossy Ibis

Although the size of the colony appears to have stabilized near 550 pairs of waders, nest-tree preferences among the herons have shifted dramatically over the last several years. Glossy Ibis nested exclusively in deciduous bushes in 1975 (Harrington, 1975). By 1978, all but one ibis nest were located in Eastern Red Cedar (Davis et al., 1979). This year's 14 ibis nests in cedar trees, and one nest in a Pitch Pine represent a total shift of nest-site preferences from deciduous bushes to evergreen trees. Similarly, over the study period Great Egrets have moved their nests from the tops of High-bush Blueberry bushes to the tops of Pitch and White Pine trees.

Table 2. Nest Tree Preference (Percentage)

	1975	1976	1977*	1978	1979	1981
BNHE						
Cedar	48	33	82	72	59	58
Cherry	10	12	8	15	19	24
Other	42	55	10	13	22	18
SNEG						
Cedar	27	52	81	82	84	95
Cherry	6	2	6	8	6	2
Other	67	46	13	10	10	3

*data from a sampled area of heronry

A closer examination of nest-tree preference among the more abundant Black-crowned Night Herons and Snowy Egrets is possible (Table 2). The early-arriving black-crowns might be expected to have an undisputed first choice of nest-trees. Since 1975 they have nested primarily in cedars. However, a recent, secondary preference for Black Cherry trees has emerged. In contrast, Snowy Egrets have shown a strong, developing preference for cedars as nest-trees since 1975.

Some of the changes might be explained in part by the fact that since 1975 the area of concentrated nesting has shifted from the center of the island, where High Bush Blueberry is abundant, to the north end of the island, where blueberry is less dense. The number of nests per tree is higher for black-crowns and snowys, and the first nests are nearly two weeks earlier in the north end of the heronry than in the older nesting area in the center of the island. In the old area, several Red Cedars were not occupied at all.

The herons of Clark's Island have enjoyed relatively high levels of nesting success when compared to other east coast heronries. Preliminary analysis shows that two to three nestlings per black-crown or snowy nest survive at least ten days. A low abundance of predators at Clark's Island accounts for part of this success. In addition, parasites on young herons have been observed infrequently at Clark's Island. From time to time, avian predators, probably Great Horned Owls, reduce heron numbers at the colony, but this has not been a problem of great significance.

Although we plan to continue collecting nesting data, the major thrust of future studies will probably take the form of limited experimental procedures aimed at answering specific questions. For example, although the collection of tape-recorded vocalizations of nesters will continue, more sophisticated record and playback techniques are planned. Goals include determining whether or not Snowy Egrets use vocalizations for individual recognition and, if so, what features of the vocalization structure (frequency patterns or amplitude patterns) are used to implement individual recognition. Other studies planned include an investigation of the interactions between Black-crowned Night Herons and Snowy Egrets, with reference to their noctural versus diurnal foraging behavior, and an analysis of feeding strategies.

Acknowledgments

Brian Harrington of the Manomet Bird Observatory initiated and has consistently provided the sustaining effort behind the Clark's Island study. Without his dedication, interest, and sense of humor, few assistants or interns would have seen beyond the guano, regurgitated fish, and poison ivy. We are especially grateful to him and to the logistical support of MBO which has made this long-term investigation possible.

We also thank Dick Forster, Brian Harrington, and Wayne Petersen for reviewing the manuscript, Lincoln Smith for field work assistance, and Dave Twitchell for the excellent photographs which were helpful in preparing the pen and ink drawings. Finally, we thank the residents of Clark's Island for their permission to study the heronry on their properties, for their continued support, and for the protection they afford the nesting herons by not encouraging people to visit the island.

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KATHARINE C. PARSONS graduated from Smith College with a B.A. in biological sciences. She is working toward her doctorate at Rutgers University in the Program in Ecology under the sponsorship of Dr. Joanna Burger. Her thesis is titled: "Proximate and Ultimate Effects of Weather on Two Herons in Massachusetts."

A CHECKLIST OF THE BIRDS OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

This new publication by Kimball C. Elkins, has been published by the Audubon Society of New Hampshire. This new checklist uses the bar graph method, which shows very quickly and clearly the seasonal distribution and relative abundance of the different species. More than 300 are listed, only accidentals being omitted.

The booklet includes short descriptions of the major birding regions of New Hampshire and of bird migration in the State, by Tudor Richards. The price is $2.00 plus $0.75 for postage and handling. Order from Audubon Society of New Hampshire, P. O. Box 528-B, 3 Silk Farm Road, Concord, N. H. 03301.

THE HERONRIES OF BOSTON HARBOR

by Jeremy J. Hatch, Boston

The striking expansion of breeding waders along the Atlantic coast has extended in the last twenty years to at least fifteen sites in Massachusetts of which three are in Boston Harbor. In 1977 the coastal survey of waterbird colonies by the Fish and Wildlife Service (Erwin, 1979) reported more than 2500 pairs from a total of seven species: scattered records suggest that the totals have not changed greatly since then, although colonies have fluctuated. This represents a great change from the 1950s when the Black-crowned Night Heron was almost the only species to be found breeding here (Griscom and Snyder, 1955). The heronries in New England are, of course, much less diverse than those farther south and the most numerous species are always the Black-crowned Night Heron and Snowy Egret, with only a scattering of up to five other species. In contrast, the southern colonies tend to be a more uniform mix, and there may be thirteen species in a colony if one includes not only the herons, egrets and ibises but also the Double-crested Cormorant and Anhinga.

The purpose of this paper is to describe the three heronries in Boston Harbor. These are on the following islands: Spectacle (Dorchester Bay), Peddocks (southwest of Hull) and Middle Brewster (north of Boston Light). The first year for which I have definite records of these heronries is 1974, but they could easily have existed for some years before that although they were probably not present in 1961 when Bill Drury studied gulls in the Harbor.

On Middle Brewster the only nesting species has been the Black-crowned Night Heron which has nested in every year for which I have records (20 to 154 pairs). Most of the nests are on or near the ground amidst the extensive brambles.

On Peddocks the heronry was located from 1974 to 1978 in an area of dense shrubs and small trees, heavily overgrown with poison ivy, on West Head. Black-crowns, Snowy Egrets and occasionally a few Glossy Ibis nested there. Several informal reports suggest that Black-crowns, at least, nested there for some years before 1974 (perhaps from about 1970). The 1978 season was notably unsuccessful, and this was also the first year that I found signs of raccoons and perhaps other predators. As far as I can tell, the heronry has not been used since then except by a few roosting night-herons.

The Spectacle heronry is at the northern end of the island and the most frequent nest-sites are in rose, buckthorn and

cherry, with some nests in apple, aspen and even sumac. The branching pattern of the last plant species seems to be less suitable for nest construction than are the other trees. Black-crowns have been the most numerous species (30 to 300 pairs), with good numbers of Snowy Egrets (a maximum of 140 pairs in 1980) and a handful of Glossy Ibis. The first pair of Great Egrets was recorded nesting in 1980.

The numbers of nesting pairs at each heronry are combined in Table 1 to give annual totals for Boston Harbor. With only three regularly breeding species this group of heronries is less diverse than either Clark's Island with five species or House Island, off Manchester, where seven species nested in 1977.

Table 1. Pairs of Waders Nesting in Boston Harbor

	1975	1976	1977	1978	1980	1981
BNHE	253	211	193	82	324	380
SNEG	70	50	59	30	140	80
GREG	0	0	0	0	1	2
GLIB	5	4	?	5	12	10
Total	328	265	252	117	477	472

The Clark's Island colony in Duxbury Bay is described by Ted Davis and Kathy Parsons (1982) in another paper in this issue. Herons probably first nested there in the late 1960s and the colony has been studied each year from 1974

onwards. In the five years for which the complete counts are reported the total numbers have fluctuated between 463 and 561 pairs. For House Island, off Manchester, there is much less information available: from 1975 through 1977 the numbers fluctuated from 812, to 235, to 944 pairs. By 1980 the colony had crashed: that year there were no more than 50 pairs of Black Crowns, and this number fell to none nesting in 1981. The fate of the colony, except for the 3 to 5 pairs of Cattle Egrets and 24 pairs of Black Crowns found nesting on Eagle Island in 1981 was a mystery, until 1982 when herons were seen flying to Kettle Island, a few miles away.

When I started to write this paper, I expected to compare the numbers of herons nesting in Boston Harbor with those reported for Clark's Island and House Island. These three sets of numbers might together suggest whether changes were very local or of a more regional character. The abandoment of Peddocks and of House Island both seem to be local events; the former was probably caused by predators, but I know no cause for the latter. The imperfect data show no general pattern in the changes of numbers since 1974, but unfortunately the gaps in the records are too numerous for any detailed conclusions.

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BIRD SURVEY IN MINUTEMAN HISTORICAL PARK

The Minuteman National Historical Park contains a variety of wetlands, forests, orchards, and farm fields which stretch along Route 2A in Lexington, Lincoln, and Concord. It also includes the area around the Old North Bridge on the Concord River. As part of a general resource inventory the National Park Service is undertaking a breeding bird survey of Park properties. They have contacted Bird Observer to ask for assistance in this effort from local birders. Anyone who would be willing to visit one or more sections of the Park in order to conduct a survey is asked to contact Lee Taylor (646-2529) or John Andrews (862-6498).

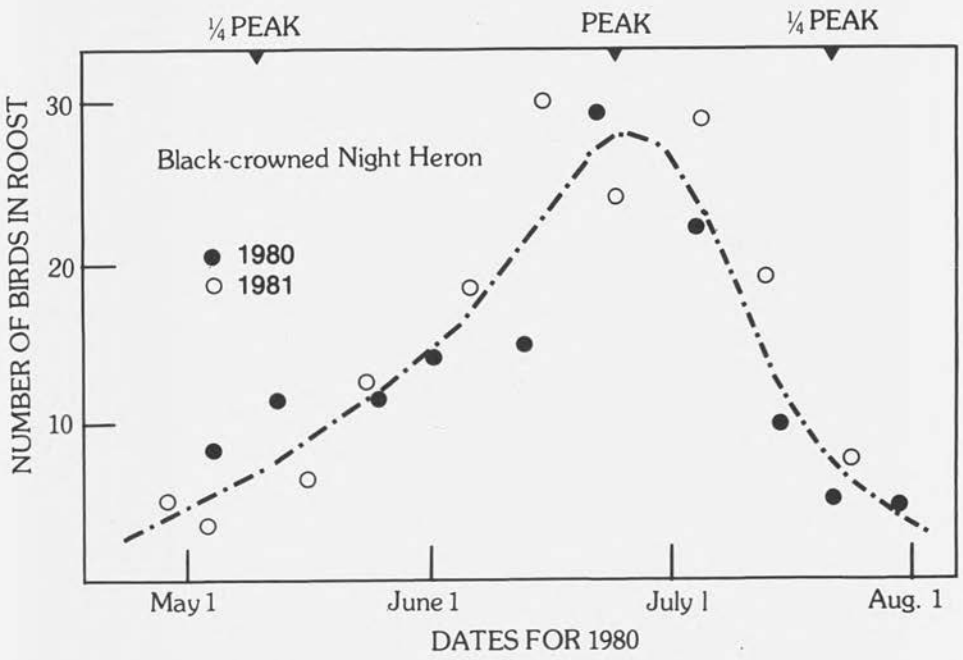
BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERONS:

THE RISE AND FALL OF A DAYTIME ROOST

by Leif J. Robinson, Wellesley

In Cambridge, Little Pond and Little Brook are loaded with carp. It's not surprising, therefore, that herons, particularly Black-crowned, love the place. For the past couple of years, I've surveyed this area near noon whenever time and weather permitted.

The Black-crowned Night Heron arrive in mid-April, peak in mid-June, and are virtually gone by mid-August (a straggler, however, can appear whenever there is open water). The growth and decay of this daytime roost is shown in the accompanying graph, which is based on 62 censuses conducted in 1980 and 1981 between late April and late July.



Each point is a 10-day average of my estimates of the number of birds present: dots for 1980 and open circles for 1981. Both years yielded about the same maximum population, some 28 individuals. In 1980 the observed peak occurred on June 24th, in 1981 it arrived about six days earlier.

However, to fit best the 1981 data to those of 1980, all of the former points had to be shifted 12 days later in time; that is, the overall arrival and departure of the herons in 1981 occurred nearly two weeks earlier than in 1980.

Even more interesting, perhaps, is the shape of the curve through the composite data. After the roost has attained seven birds (quarter peak strength), 44 days are required to reach maximum; thereafter, only 28 days are needed for the roost to fall back to the seven-bird level. Why the asymmetry?

The actions of two other species may shed some light on this question. Up to mid-June both Great Black-backed Gulls and Double-crested Cormorants occur regularly on Little Pond. Then they vanish, concomitant with the beginning of the Black-crowned colony's wane.

Are the carp involved in some way? Does the same spring and summer cycle prevail at other daytime roosts?

LEIF J. ROBINSON is editor of Sky and Telescope, an international popular magazine of astronomy and space science. He has been a bird student for 15 years with a principal interest in resident populations and the statistical means for assessing them. Mr. Robinson is also active in studying the migration of birds of prey.

BEHAVIOR-WATCHING FIELD NOTES

by Donald and Lillian Stokes, Carlisle

Denise Braunhardt observed gulls in unusual flight behavior, the birds "zig-zagging, dropping erratically, and teetering from side to side." The birds were in large flocks both on the ice and in the air; no small groups were seen. At the same time a Gyrfalcon was spotted hunting in the area. Squantum Marsh, 2/7/82, 9 A.M.

Comment. Many species of birds display this same type of flight behavior when faced with an aerial predator; in fact, when you see this behavior, you can almost predict the presence of the predator. Flock cohesion may occur through each member trying to get to the center of the flock since this is the safest spot.

Denise Braunhardt also observed a Short-eared Owl for 30 minutes. The owl, after looking around in all directions, "tore up 10-15 beakfuls of semi-decayed grass" and then dropped them in "apparently random spots." Salisbury Campground, 3/10/82, 12 noon.

Comment. As Denise suggested, this may be (1) redirected aggression since there were other owls in the area or (2) some, as yet incomplete, behavior associated with nest-building.

Bill and May Harris observed a White-breasted Nuthatch enter a bird box 8 feet from their house every night through the winter. The same thing happened the following winter until mid-December when the bird was no longer seen. Chelmsford, 1981-82.

Comment. Pairs of White-breasted Nuthatches generally stay on their territories throughout winter, and each bird uses its own roost hole each night. Downy Woodpeckers also do this, and the two species may compete over particular roost holes. In some cases the roost hole of the male is taken over by the female in late winter, and this is then used as the nest site in spring.

Chris Floyd and Lee Taylor heard two Screech Owls in an area also containing a Great Horned Owl or other big owl. The Screech Owls used only their monotone call and seemed to call in response to each other and to imitations of Great Horned and Screech Owls made by the observers. Belmont, 2/8/82. 9:30 P.M.

Comment. The Screech Owl has two common calls: the monotone and the "screech." The latter is used from mid-summer until January and is believed to be a contact note keeping members of a pair or family in touch. The monotone call is

heard from February until mid-summer and is a courtship call. Generally the male gives this just after landing as he flies about the female, moving closer and closer. The female is usually silent. Chances are that the observers came upon a courting male and that when he swooped over them, he was considering them a competitor.

Leif Robinson heard a Mockingbird give a "chewk-call" just as a kestrel swooped close to its head. The Mockingbird immediately flew off after the kestrel. Cambridge, 8/13/81, 3 P.M.

Comment. This is a real stumper. In August, breeding is over, and the birds are not territorial. Are Mockingbirds ever really prey for kestrels? Were these juvenile or adult birds?

If you have observations of bird behavior that interest or puzzle you, send them to us for our next column. Behavior Field Notes, 52 Nowell Farm Road, Carlisle, MA. 01741. We look forward to hearing from you.

Snowy Egret Displaying *Photo by David C. Twichell*

Behavior Research Articles

Since this issue of Bird Observer deals primarily with herons, we thought it might be helpful to include information on heron displays that would help you interpret some of what you see herons do. The information is drawn from two superb articles: Meyerriecks (1960) and Mock (1976).

Alarm Reactions

Snowy Egret: extends neck, raises crest, and gives "aarg aarg" call.

Great Blue Heron: erects head and neck, sleeks plumage, and freezes or slowly flies away giving "franhnk" call.

Aggressive Displays

Snowy Egret: in mild aggression bird raises crest and pectoral plumes and extends head and neck; during intense aggression, bird holds neck in "S" shape with bill pointed down, erects plumes, and gives harsh "aarg" or " raah" calls.

Great Blue Heron: in mild aggression the bird does the "upright display" holding head and neck at 45° with plumage sleeked; intense aggression involves head, neck, and crest feathers erected, head pointed down, and "rok rok" calls given.

Sexual Displays on Breeding Grounds

Snowy Egret: "Stretch display" is done mostly by male and occurs in several contexts. With head over back and bill pointing up, bird pumps head up and down while giving "wah wah wah" calls.

Great Blue Heron: "Stretch display" is done by male and female especially during pair formation and nest building. Starting from a resting position, the bird extends its neck and head to a vertical position and then slowly lowers it while giving a moan-like call. The whole movement takes about 10 seconds.

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Behavior-Watching in the Months Ahead

Most people think that the small flocks of chickadees that roam about territories are just a winter phenomenon, when actually they form as early as mid-August. An interesting feature of these flocks is that other species tend to join them, forming what is commonly known as "mixed flocks." Watch for these by first locating a chickadee flock and then observing all other species that seem to be associated with it. During August and September look for warblers in these mixed flocks. After migrating all night, many warbler species have the tendency to follow chickadee flocks during the day as they feed. They may do this to take advantage of the chickadees' knowledge of local feeding areas. Warblers have been noticed to stop giving their own contact-calls once they joined with chickadees, possibly using the chickadee contact notes to stay together. This may make them less conspicuous and minimize their competition with the chickadees. You might consider keeping track of which warbler species join chickadees and see whether they display any differences in behavior.

Also joining chickadee flocks at this time are the following: creepers, kinglets, woodpeckers, titmice, and nuthatches. As one of these flocks passes you in the woods, watch to see which species tend to lead, which are in the middle, and which typically follow. Also, look for interactions between individuals. Is aggression primarily within species or between species? If between species, which ones in particular?

Many other types of mixed flocks also occur in August and September, so it is a great time for observing. The key question about these flocks has yet to be answered, and that is, why have these associations evolved. What are the benefits from mixed flocks? And do all species in a flock benefit equally? As you watch and record the types of mixed flocks that you see in late summer and fall, keep these questions in mind and see whether you can come up with your own answers.

DONALD and LILLIAN STOKES are naturalists and authors. Don's works include A Guide to Nature in Winter, A Guide to the Behavior of Common Birds, and The Natural History of Wild Shrubs and Vines. He and Lillian are presently working on a second volume of the bird behavior book soon to be published.

Field Records: March 1982

by George W. Gove, Robert H. Stymeist, Lee E. Taylor

March 1982 was a sunny month with below normal but very frequent precipitation. The fabled March winds were uncharacteristically light and temperatures were near normal. The temperature averaged 38.7°, just 0.6° above normal and 0.4° cooler than March 1981. The high degree mark came on March 11 at 63°; the low was 10° on the first. Precipitation totaled 2.17 inches, 1.84 inches under normal but much more than the 0.62 inch recorded in the very dry March of 1981. In the first seventeen days only two days were without rain. Only ten days during the month had no rain at all. Snow totaled 5.3 inches, 2.5 inches less than average. The season total was 48.5 inches, 7.2 inches more than average. This was the largest accumulation since 1978. Fog was a very frequent weather event, especially in the first half of the month. Thunderstorms were recorded in the greater Boston area on March 12.

LOONS THROUGH MERGANSERS

An Arctic Loon was seen on the 23rd at the north end of Plum Island. The following is excerpted from the details provided by the observer who saw the bird at a minimum distance of one hundred yards under good conditions. Its size overall was similar to a Common Loon's but the head and neck were decidedly slimmer and the crown was gently rounded without the prominent bump on the forehead of a typical Common Loon. The bill was straight and slender. The bird was in winter plumage; dorsally it was a uniform dark brown to blackish and, on the head, this dark feathering came to the bottom of the eye there being no apparent whitish before or above the eye. The dark dorsal feathering of the neck shared an even edge with the white of the throat; most Common Loons show an indentation of white feathering here. The nape was lighter in color than the sides of the neck, and the bird did not show any apparent white blaze of feathers at the flank.

Red-necked Grebes were accumulating along the coast and a Western Grebe was seen by many observers in Scituate at the end of the month. Snowy Egrets and Glossy Ibis appeared in Squantum on March 22. A Whistling Swan was present throughout the month on Martha's Vineyard, possibly the same bird seen there in December. The TASL Boston Harbor census recorded 1053 Brant and the White-fronted Geese were last reported on the 7th having been present in Newburyport since February 8. Snow Geese, up to 150, were at Plum Island at the end of the month, and a "Blue" Goose was seen in Concord. Blue-winged Teal were first reported on the 16th, and two "Common" or "Eurasian" Teal were seen, one at Plum Island and one in the Sudbury River Valley. European Wigeon were also reported from these two locations. Six drake and three hen Barrow's Goldeneyes were in Newburyport Harbor throughout the month, and five King Eider were reported from three locations. G.W.G.

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVER
Common Loon:			
4,13	P.I., Plymouth	7, 8	D.Spencer, SSBC
10,28	Pembroke, Scituate	1, 6	W.Petersen, BBC
20-21	Nantucket	65	BBC
Arctic Loon:			
23	P.I. (north end)	1 (details)	R.Heil
Red-throated Loon:			
9,24;28	P.I.; N.Scituate	1, 1; 1	D.Spencer,A.Blaisdell; BBC
20-21	Nantucket	30	BBC
Red-necked Grebe:			
3,6	Manomet, Rockport	41, 2	S.Higginbotham, J.Berry
4,6	Swampscott-Marblehead, Cape Ann	67, 82	R.Heil
7,13,20	Dennis	max. 216	J.Aylward#

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS
Red-necked Grebe (continued):			
20-21	Nantucket	35	BBC
26-30	Scituate	max. 6	v.o.
Horned Grebe:			
3,6	Manomet, Gloucester	15, 70	S.Higginbotham, R.Heil
9,21	P.I., Concord	43, 1	D.Spencer, J.Hines
28,30	Scituate	max. 5	v.o.
Western Grebe:			
22-31	Scituate	1 dk. morph	R.Campbell + v.o.
Pied-billed Grebe:			
3, 13	Plymouth	1	S.Higginbotham
21,25	Wayland, SRV	1, 1	J.Hines, R.Walton
Gannet:			
14	Eastham (2 loc.)	6, 8	S.Higginbotham
20-21,25	Nant., P.I.	35, 3	BBC, F.Bouchard
Great Cormorant:			
1-18, 6	Somerville, Rockport	max. 6, 15	J.Berry
20-21	Nantucket	250	BBC
28	Squantum, Scituate	15, 48	BBC
Double-crested Cormorant:			
4,14	Winthrop, Squantum	1 imm., 4	R.Heil, BBC
7,23	Nahant, P.I.	1, 1 ad.	TASL, R.Heil
29	Foxboro	300 flying	D.Brown
Great Blue Heron:			
13;14	Plymouth, Falmouth; Bourne	4, 1; 2	SSBC, R.Stymeist#;D.Briggs
17-31,24	Saugus, Woburn	1, 1	J.Berry, A.Blaisdell
27-31	P.I.	1	v.o.
28,30	Duxbury, Rockport	14, 5	M.Chick, P.Stangel
Snowy Egret:			
22,25	Squantum	1, 1	J.Donovan, S.Higginbotham
30	Marshfield	5	D.Clapp
Black-crowned Night Heron:			
27-31	P.I.	max. 5	v.o.
Glossy Ibis:			
22	Squantum	2	J.Donovan
Mute Swan:			
20-21,31	Nant., S.Carver	35, 11	BBC, J.Shaw
27	Westport, Duxbury	150, 2	G.Gove, D.Clapp
Whistling Swan:			
thr.	M.V.	1	V.Laux
Canada Goose:			
thr.	P.I.	max. 900	v.o.
7,20-21	Newton, Nantucket	91, 200	O.Komar, BBC
Brant:			
thr.	Squantum	max. 1200	v.o.
3,7	Plymouth, Boston Harbor	900, 1053	S.Higginbotham, TASL
20,30	Osterville, Marshfield	5, 80	J.Berry, D.Clapp
31	Newbypt Harbor	175	F.Hamlen#
White-fronted Goose:			
7	Newbypt	5	R.Stymeist
Snow Goose:			
24-31	P.I.	max. 150	v.o.
"Blue" Goose:			
20	Concord	1 ad.	R.Stymeist, R.Walton
Black Duck:			
9,23	P.I. (PRNWR)	785, 1670	D.Spencer
Gadwall:			
3,10;4	Plymouth; Salem	11, 12; 14	S.Higginbotham,W.Petersen;R.Heil
14-21,20	Wayland, GMNWR	2, 6	v.o., R.Stymeist#
13,28	W.Harwich, Gloucester	2, 14	B.Nikula, J.Heywood#
23-31	P.I.	max. 20	v.o.
Pintail:			
9-31	P.I.	max. 100	v.o.
3,14	Plymouth, SRV	1 m., 4	S.Higginbotham, R.Walton
20,21	Concord, Wayland	8, 12	R.Stymeist, J.Hines
Green-winged Teal:			
14-31	P.I.	max. 60	v.o.
14;21	SRV, W.Roxbury; Braintree	11, 14; 2	R.Walton,BBC;R.Campbell
Blue-winged Teal:			
17,21	Wayland	2, 4 m.	J.Hines#

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS
Blue-winged Teal (continued):			
16,30	Salisbury, Marshfield	1 f., 2	R.Heil, D.Clapp
27-31	P.I.	max. 10	v.o.
"Eurasian" Teal:			
17,27	Wayland, P.I.	1, 1 m.	J.Hines, W.Petersen
European Wigeon:			
20-22	SRV	1 m.	R.Walton + v.o.
21-27	P.I.	1 m.	L.Jodrey + v.o.
American Wigeon:			
14,21	SRV, Wayland	5, 8	R.Walton, J.Hines
20-21,27	Nant., P.I.	16, 15	BBC, SSBC
20,21	Braintree, S.Hanson	1, 1	S.Higginbotham, W.Petersen
Northern Shoveler:			
13,14	Duxbury, SRV	1 f., 2	S.Higginbotham, R.Forster#
27	P.I.	2 m.	BBC
Wood Duck:			
13	IRWS, Plymouth	10, 1 f.	R.Heil, SSBC
14,16	Needham, Lincoln	7, 5	BBC, W.Harrington
17,21	Wayland	6, 19	J.Hines
2 to 8 reported from ten locations.			
Redhead:			
14-28	Lakeville	1-2 pr.	v.o.
14, 28	Newbypt, Falmouth	5, 1	BBC
20-21	Nant.	70	BBC
Ring-necked Duck:			
7,21	Lakeville, S.Hanson	25, 125	D.Briggs, W.Petersen
27,28	W.Peabody, Carver	50, 200	H.Wiggin#, D.Briggs
1 to 20 reported from twelve locations.			
Canvasback:			
7,14	Wollaston, Newbypt	9, 50	TASL, BBC
13;27	Falmouth, Brewster; Westport	45, 140; 60	R.Stymeist,J.Aylward;G.Gove
1 to 25 reported from eight locations.			
Greater Scaup:			
4,7	Winthrop-Salem, Boston Harbor	1750, 2885	R.Heil, TASL
20,21	Newbypt, Nant.	600, 500	BBC
28	Squantum	240	BBC
Common Goldeneye:			
7,13-28	Newton, SRV	17, max. 5	O.Komar, R.Walton
14,22	Newbypt	max. 750	v.o.
Barrow's Goldeneye:			
thr.	Newbypt	max. 9 (6 m., 3 f.)	v.o.
4,6	Swampscott, Gloucester	1 m., 1 f.	R.Heil
3,5,13	Plymouth	max. 2	v.o.
7,20	Boston Harbor, Dennis	1 m. + 1 f., 1	TASL, J.Aylward
Bufflehead:			
28	Squantum-Milton, Scituate	50, 20	BBC
1-15 reported from three inland locations.			
Oldsquaw:			
14-27	Newbypt	max. 300	v.o.
20-21	Nant.	500+	BBC
Harlequin Duck:			
6;19,28	Rockport; Gloucester	3 m.,1 f; 1 m.,1 f.	J.Berry#;W.Sumner,J.Heywood
thr.	E.Orleans	pr.	v.o.
Common Eider:			
7	Boston Harbor	3117	TASL
3,13	Plymouth	max. 4000	v.o.
20-21	Nantucket	2000	BBC
King Eider:			
7,14	Quincy	2 (1 ad.m. + 1 subad.)	TASL, BBC
2-23	Quincy-Nut I.	2 ad. + 1 subad.	v.o.
14,19	Eastham, Scituate	1 m., 1 f.	S.Higginbotham, D.Brown
White-winged Scoter:			
20-21	Nant.	1000	BBC
27	Eastham	5000+	B.Nikula
Surf Scoter:			
4,20-21	Marblehead, Nant.	140, 250	R.Heil, BBC
27	Eastham	250	B.Nikula
Black Scoter:			
20-21,27	Nant., Eastham	600, 1000+	BBC, B.Nikula

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS
Ruddy Duck:			
7,22-30	Dorchester, Newbypt	2, 2	TASL, BBC + v.o.
Hooded Merganser:			
6	Belmont, Medford	1 m., 3	L.Taylor
13-31	SRV	max. 18 3/14	R.Walton + v.o.
21,22	Braintree, S.Hanson	10, 10	R.Campbell, W.Petersen
Common Merganser:			
7,13	Newton, Plymouth	52, 50	O.Komar, SSBC
14,20	Newbypt, Braintree	85, 77	P.Hallowell;S.Higginbotham
28	Milton, SRV	43, 25	BBC, R.Walton
Red-breasted Merganser:			
9-23	P.I. (PRNWR)	max. 83	D.Spencer
20-21	Nant.	750	BBC

RAPTORS

Turkey Vultures continue to be reported in increasing numbers along eastern and coastal Massachusetts. Griscom and Snyder (1955) considered them an uncommon wanderer here. As many as fifteen were found in Hardwick on the 14th. Goshawks were reported from five locations with one (or more) seen most of the month at Plum Island. Red-shouldered Hawks were seen on territory at Boxford State Forest at the month's end. As many as eleven Rough-legged Hawks were reported from the Newburyport area on the 14th. Along the Merrimac River at least two Bald Eagles were seen at various points during the first week of the month. Ospreys were on nests along the Westport River by the end of March and Peregrine Falcons were found at Scituate and Monomoy. R.H.S.

Turkey Vulture:			
2,10,14	W.Peabody,Carlisle,Belmont	1, 1, 1	R.Heil, R.Dwyer, N.Claflin
8,11,15	Chelmsford, Haverhill, Lexington	1, 1, 1	A.Reade,K.Carpenter,L.Taylor
14,27	Hardwick, W.Newbury	15, 1	M.Reinstein#, W.Petersen
27	Orleans, Kingston	1, 1	B.Nikula, B.Sorrie
Goshawk:			
3,6	Lincoln, W.Newbury	1 imm, 1 imm.	D.+ L.Stokes, P.Roberts#
6,14	P.I.	1 imm., 1	P.Roberts#, H.D'Entremont
20,23	P.I.	1, 1 imm.	L.Robinson, R.Heil
22,23	Littleton, Salisbury	1, 1	V.Sprong, R.Heil
Sharp-shinned Hawk:			
6,22	W.Newbury, Rowley	1, 3	P.Roberts#, F.Bouchard#
Cooper's Hawk:			
28,30	P.I., Sudbury	1, 1	F.Bouchard, R.Walton
Red-tailed Hawk:			
6,21	Salisbury, Wayland	7, 6	P.Roberts#, G.Gove
Red-shouldered Hawk:			
8,11	Concord, Norwell	1, 1	R.Walton, J.Flaherty
12,14	E.Middleboro, Newbypt	1, 2 ad.	K.Anderson, R.Stymeist#
18,28	Medfield, Boxford	1, 2	K.Ryan, J.Heywood#
Rough-legged Hawk:			
thr.	P.I.-Newbypt-Salisbury	max. 11 3/14	v.o.
30	Milton (F.M.)	1	D.Brown
Bald Eagle:			
6	Salisbury	1 ad., 1 subad.	P.Roberts
9	Tyngsboro, Lawrence	1 ad., 1 ad.	C.Hayword, R.Hooten
Northern Harrier:			
thr.,20-21	P.I., Nant.	max. 6 3/23, 10	v.o., BBC
Osprey:			
18,27 on	Waltham, Lakeville	1, 1 (at nest)	E.Wade, G.Gove#
27,28	Westport, Falmouth	11 (at nests), 2	G.Gove, R.Timberlake#
Peregrine Falcon:			
19,20	Scituate, Monomoy	1, 1	D.Brown, B.Nikula
Merlin:			
20,31	P.I.	1, 1	BBC, F.Hamlen

SHOREBIRDS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Oystercatchers were reported from Nantucket on the 20th; Piping Plovers were found at Scituate and Monomoy, and nine were noted from Coast Guard Beach on the 27th. Killdeer were reported in good numbers by mid-month and American Woodcocks were reported in courtship flight from many locations toward the end of the month. Common Snipe were reported in numbers after March 20 with fifteen noted in Concord and nineteen in Marshfield. An early Lesser Yellowlegs was carefully observed and its call

notes heard in Newburyport Harbor on the 27th. The TASL census reported over 300 Purple Sandpipers at Nahant on the 7th. The first Pectoral Sandpipers were reported from Salisbury on March 19.

Glaucous Gulls, both second winter birds, were reported from two inland locations in Wayland and West Peabody. A first winter Thayer's Gull was found at the north end of Plum Island on the 21st where it was carefully studied.

Good numbers of Razorbills were found in Nantucket Sound where sixty-one were counted from the ferry on March 20, and another twenty-four were recorded from the shores of Nantucket. Common Murres were found in Scituate and in Pocasset; another was picked up dead in Scituate. With winds out of the northeast on March 6, thirty-five Guillemots were reported from Gloucester at Eastern Point and Bass Rocks.

Great Horned Owls were reported nesting from six locations during the month. Snowy Owls continued throughout the month at Plum Island. A Red-bellied Woodpecker was found in Orleans; the Red-headed Woodpecker continued throughout the month at Horn Pond in Woburn, and an early Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was reported from Norwell. R.H.S.

American Oystercatcher:			
20	Nantucket	3	BBC
Piping Plover:			
19-30,20	Scituate, Monomoy	6-3, 3	D.Brown + v.o., B.Nikula
27	Coast Guard Beach	9	B.Nikula
Killdeer:			
7	Medfield, Weymouth, Rockport	3, 1, 1	P.Hallowell,W.Petersen,R.Hale
11,13,14	Salem, Ipswich, SRV	3, 2, 4	R.Heil, J.Berry, R.Walton
14	P.I., Scituate, W.Roxbury	8, 9, 3	R.Veit,J.Flaherty,O.Komar#
Widespread arrival after the 14th from many locations.			
Ruddy Turnstone:			
20-21	Nantucket	2	BBC
American Woodcock:			
5,14	Cambridge, Lakeville	1, 2	L.Taylor, fide D.Briggs
15,17	Lincoln, Ipswich	2, 4-5	W.Harrington, J.Berry
Many reports of one to three individuals between March 18 and 25.			
22,30	Rockport, Milton (F.M.)	5, 8	P.Stangel, D.Brown
Common Snipe:			
6,21	Cambridge, W.Roxbury	1, 10	L.Taylor, R.Stymeist#
27	Rowley, Concord	5, 15	M.Argue#, R.Forster
29	Rockport, Marshfield	4, 19	P.Stangel, D.Brown
Greater Yellowlegs:			
23,27	P.I., Squantum	3, 1	D.Spencer, D.Brown#
Lesser Yellowlegs:			
27-31	Newburyport	1	W.Petersen + v.o.
	Very early, carefully observed; call notes heard.		
Red Knot:			
4	Revere	7	R.Heil
Purple Sandpiper:			
4,7	Marblehead, Rockport	100+, 25	R.Heil, fide R.+ D.Hale
7,20	Nahant, Nantucket	300, 40	TASL, BBC
Pectoral Sandpiper:			
19	Salisbury	3	D.Briggs#
Dunlin:			
4	Revere	100	R.Heil
Sanderling:			
4;27	Revere; P.I., Sandwich	80; 3, 3	R.Heil; BBC, BBC
Glaucous Gull:			
6,21	Gloucester, Wayland	1 (1W), 1 (2W)	R.Heil, G.Gove
22	W.Peabody	1 (2W)	R.Heil
Iceland Gull:			
6,14	Gloucester, P.I.	42, 20	R.Heil, R.Veit
20,22	Nantucket, P.I.	25, 32	BBC, F.Bouchard
Thayer's Gull:			
21-23	P.I.	1 (1W)	R.Veit, R.Heil, J.Hatch
Ring-billed Gull:			
3,6	Plymouth, Winchester	350, 100+	S.Higginbotham, R.Clayton
16	Newbypt	1000+	R.Heil
Little Gull:			
4-30	Newbypt	1-2	v.o.
Black-legged Kittiwake:			
20-21	Nantucket	3	BBC

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS
Razorbill:			
20,21	Nant. Sound, Nant.	61, 24	BBC
28	Sandwich	1	BBC
Common Murre:			
14,19;27	Scituate; Pocasset	1, 1 dead; 1	J.Hatch,D.Brown;P.Hallowell
Thick-billed Murre:			
19	Scituate	2	D.Brown
Dovekie:			
7	Rockport	2	BBC
Black Guillemot:			
4,6	Marblehead Neck, Rockport	4, 3-4	R.Heil, J.Berry#
6	Gloucester (E.P. + Bass Rocks)	35	R.Heil
7,28	Nahant, N.Scituate	2, 2	TASL, BBC
Screech Owl:			
10,11	GMNWR, Salisbury	4, 1	C.Floyd#, H.+ N.Ober
Great Horned Owl:			
thr.	Nesting pairs in Milton, Westwood, Lexington, Abington, Needham, and two pairs nesting in Marshfield.		v.o.
Snowy Owl:			
thr.	P.I.-Newbypt	1-3	v.o.
23+24	Squantum	1	D.Brown
Barred Owl:			
9-10,28	Baldwinville, Middleboro	1, 1	J.O'Regan, D.Briggs
29	Milton (F.M.)	1	M.Murphy
Long-eared Owl:			
6,9+14	Lexington, W.Roxbury	1, 1	L.Taylor, O.Komar#
Short-eared Owl:			
thr.	Salisbury, Squantum, P.I.	1-3, 1-2, 1-2	v.o.
19-20,20-21	Yarmouth, Nant.	1-2, 4	J.Aylward, BBC
23	Rockport	1	P.Stangel
Saw-whet Owl:			
1-23,20-21	Wollaston, Nantucket	1, 1	D.Brown, BBC
Belted Kingfisher:			
15 on	General arrival with many reports of one to three individuals from widespread locations.		
Pileated Woodpecker:			
4,16	Carlisle, Auburndale	1, 1	D.+ L.Stokes, E.Mayer
23	IRWS	1	R.Heil
Red-bellied Woodpecker:			
14	Orleans	2	S.Higginbotham#
Red-headed Woodpecker:			
thr.	Woburn (Horn Pond)	1 (from 11/27)	G.Gove + v.o.
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:			
29	Norwell	1 ad.	S.Higginbotham

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH SNOW BUNTING

One or possibly two Common Ravens continued this month to be seen near the Quabbin Reservoir baffle dams and fishing area, with access via Gate 43 in Hardwick. This is one of very few eastern Massachusetts occurrences of this species, the most recent previous records dating from the spring of 1980. Reports had been unusually low for most of the winter. A Yellow-headed Blackbird was seen for one day along the North River in Pembroke. This was the fifteenth spring record in nine years and was, typically, of an immature bird. Only two previous sightings have been of adult male birds.

With the exception of Pine Grosbeak, the irruptive winter finch species remained into March. Several new Hoary Redpoll reports were received, most with excellent details. The Plum Island bird continued to be seen through the sixth. The last significant numbers of Common Redpoll were seen during the third week of the month. Pine Siskins were observed in small numbers throughout the region, some apparently intent on breeding. Both copulation and nest-building were noted among Cambridge birds.

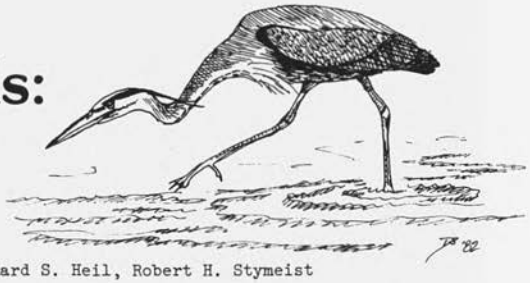
Fox Sparrows moved through the region in good numbers during the third week of the month. Plum Island observers reported 1000 Snow Buntings migrating northward on March 6.

Eastern Phoebe:			
12,14	Dedham, Lincoln	1, 1	J.Marshall, W.Harrington

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS
Eastern Phoebe (continued):			
15	E.Middleboro, Manomet	1, 1	K.Anderson, B.Harrington
17 on	various loc.	24 ind.	v.o.
23,30	IRWS, Rockport	5, 5	R.Heil, P.Stangel
Horned Lark:			
13,20-21	Ipswich, Nantucket	33, 25	J.Berry, BBC
27	P.I.	20	F.Bouchard
Tree Swallow:			
14,20	Newbypt, Wayland	1, 4	R.Veit, R.Stymeist
20,27	SRV, Sudbury	27, 70+	R.Walton, R.Forster#
Common Raven:			
6,14	Hardwick (Quabbin)	1, 1-2	G.Gove#
Common Crow:			
9,14	P.I., P.I.-Newbypt	31, 600 migr.	D.Spencer, R.Veit
Fish Crow:			
19	Marshfield, Sudbury	1, 1	D.Clapp, H.Wiggin
21	Wayland, Boston	9, 22	K.Hamilton, R.Stymeist
28	Whitman	3	W.Petersen
Black-capped Chickadee:			
6,17	SRV, E.Middleboro	14,25+	R.Walton, K.Anderson
Boreal Chickadee:			
7-28	Framingham	1	E.Morrier
Red-breasted Nuthatch:			
thr.,13	Kingston, P.I.	11 max., 6	B.Sorrie, BBC
13,20-21	Plymouth, Nant.	1, 1	SSBC, BBC
Brown Creeper:			
6,13-29	Concord, various loc.	4, 5 ind.	R.Walton, v.o.
Winter Wren:			
28	Middleboro	1	D.Briggs
Carolina Wren:			
3,13	Manomet, Falmouth	1, 7	S.Higginbotham, R.Emery#
16,20	Lincoln, Weston	1, 1	W.Harrington, J.Hines
Brown Thrasher:			
10,28	Stoneham, Carver	1, 2	M.Martinek, D.Briggs
American Robin:			
11,14	Scituate, Belmont	5, 16	J.Flaherty, N.Claflin
20-21, 27	Nantucket, SRV	30, 55	BBC, R.Walton
28,29	Falmouth, Marshfield	30, 50	BBC, D.Brown
Eastern Bluebird:			
16,19	Rowley, Tyngsboro	3, 2 m.	D.Alexander, L.Files
24,25	Carver, Plymouth	1 m., 1	R.Turner, K.Anderson
29,30	Rockport	1 f., 1 m. + 2 f.	P.Stangel
Golden-crowned Kinglet:			
2,21	IRWS, Cambridge	5, 2	R.Heil, F.Bouchard
31	Rockport	10	P.Stangel
Water Pipit:			
30	Concord	4	D.+ L.Stokes
Cedar Waxwing:			
7	Hingham	25	W.Petersen
Northern Shrike:			
9,12-23	P.I., Rockport	1, 1 imm.	D.Spencer, P.Stangel
21,24	P.I., Rockport	1, 1 b.	M.Noland, R.Norris
Yellow-rumped Warbler:			
13,20-21,28,30	Plym.,Nant.,Sandwich,Concord	12,15,2,3	SSBC, BBC, BBC, R.Walton
Eastern Meadowlark:			
14	Newbypt, Bridgewater	3, 8	R.Barber#, K.Holmes
23,26	P.I., Concord	30, 1	D.Spencer, J.Baird#
Yellow-headed Blackbird:			
11	Pembroke	1 subad.	W.Harrington#
Red-winged Blackbird:			
4,5	Rowley, Rockland	100+, 35	D.Alexander, W.Petersen
6,14	Belmont, Peabody	45, 200	L.Taylor, D.Hill
Rusty Blackbird:			
14	W.Roxbury, P.I.	5, 2	BBC
18,21	GMNWR, Norfolk	20+, 2	L.Taylor#, F.Hamlen
30,31	Milton, Dover	3, 8	D.Brown, F.Hamlen
Brewer's Blackbird: (Details on file.)			
30	Bolton	1	S.Carroll + M.Lynch
Common Grackle:			
3,5	Middleboro, Concord	25+, 3	D.Briggs, R.Walton
14	Newbypt, Peabody	100, 100	BBC, D.Hill
15,20-21	Ipswich, Nant.	75, 200	J.Berry, BBC

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVER
Common Grackle (continued):			
27	SRV	78	R.Walton
Brown-headed Cowbird:			
3,13	Middleboro, Plymouth	25+, 30	D.Briggs, SSBC
14,23	Newbypt, Concord	40, 4	BBC, R.Walton
Purple Finch:			
17,22	Lincoln, Sudbury	8+, 2	D.+ L.Stokes, F.Bouchard
Hoary Redpoll:			
from Feb.6	P.I.	1	P.Roberts#
1-12,3-24	Concord, Littleton	2 ph., 1	R.Walton, J.Baird
13, 20	IRWS, Nant.	1, 1	R.+ B.Heil, BBC
Common Redpoll:			
1-21,4-30	Belmont, Whitman	50 max. 3/1, 20 max.	L.Robinson#, W.Petersen
6,6-9	Concord, P.I.	70, 35 max.	R.Walton, v.o.
13,22	IRWS, Stoughton	95+, 76	R.Heil, R.Titus
26-30,31	Marshfield, W.Roxbury	1, 1	D.Clapp, M.Greenwald
Pine Siskin:			
3,7	Sudbury, Newton	5, 7	J.Gorman, O.Komar
11,19	Cambridge, Carlisle	2 pr., 2	R.Stymeist, D.+ L.Stokes
20	Osterville, Newbypt	2, 3	J.Berry, BBC
22,28	Cambridge, Milton	2, 1	F.Bouchard, BBC
Red Crossbill:			
14,16	Barnstable (S.N.), Cambridge	1, 1	S.Higginbotham#, J.Heywood
18,22	Lynn, Groton	1, 3	R.Heil, Hopkins
White-winged Crossbill:			
1,4	Belmont, Cambridge (Mt.A.)	3, 3	L.Robinson, J.Heywood
7,13	Framingham, Eastham	16, 3	E.Morrier, S.Higginbotham#
21	Boston (A.A.)	18	R.Stymeist#
Rufous-sided Towhee:			
from Feb.1	S.Peabody	1 m.	R.Heil
13,28	Falmouth	3, 1	R.Stymeist#, BBC
Tree Sparrow:			
6,23	Woburn, Boston	6, 6	BBC, M.Greenwald
Field Sparrow:			
1,13	S.Peabody, Falmouth	3, 3	R.Heil, R.Emery#
19,20	Woburn, P.I.	1, 2	G.Gove, T.Martin
White-throated Sparrow:			
10,28	Stoneham, Falmouth	5, 10	M.Martinek, BBC
Fox Sparrow:			
10,14	Stoneham, Salisbury	2, 1	M.Martinek, R.Stymeist
17,22	Concord, Brookline	3, 6	R.Walton, C.+ N.Hubbar
23,29	IRWS, Carlisle	12, 5	R.Heil, D.+ L.Stokes
Swamp Sparrow:			
3,7	Plymouth, Newton	1, 1	S.Higginbotham, O.Komar
27	P.I.	1	BBC
Song Sparrow:			
6,20-27	Belmont, P.I.	18, 28 max.	L.Taylor, v.o.
27,28	SRV, Falmouth	10, 20	R.Walton, BBC
Lapland Longspur:			
20,27	Monomoy, P.I.	8, 1	B.Nikula, BBC
Snow Bunting:			
6,7	P.I., Framingham	1000, 3	P.Roberts#, E.Morrier
14,16	Hardwick, Scituate	120, 9	G.Gove#, J.Flaherty

Field Records: April 1982



by George W. Gove, Richard S. Heil, Robert H. Stymeist

April 1982 will be remembered for the devastating snowstorm of April 6 and 7 that resulted in high bird mortality. Snow totaled 13.3 inches, 12.6 inches more than average and set a new record for the month. The old record was 9.1 inches in 1917. The snow came in one storm on the 6th and 7th, and 13.2 inches fell in 24 hours. More snow would have accumulated had not the large amount of heat in the ground rapidly melted it. The winter seasonal total now stands at 61.8 inches, 19.9 inches over the average and the thirteenth greatest in 92 years of records. More on the storm later.

The temperature in April averaged 48.2°; the high of 83° on the 25th topped the old mark of 81° in 1897. The low of 16° on the 7th was the lowest for April; the previous low was 20° in 1943. Precipitation totalled 3.42 inches, just 0.07 inch under normal. Thus many records were broken in this memorable April of 1982.

The deep snow cover and low temperatures immediately following the blizzard created a severe hardship for many of the early spring migrants. Some of these included Wood Duck, Killdeer, American Woodcock, Eastern Phoebe, Tree Swallow, American Robin, Eastern Bluebird and blackbirds. The lack of available food during the day, despite the considerable efforts of many people to keep feeders filled and food spread in feeding areas, made it very difficult for birds to maintain a normal body temperature, especially at night. The birds became concentrated in the few areas that afforded food and shelter. American Woodcocks and American Robins were seen in unusual numbers on plowed streets, and with many birds undoubtedly in weakened condition, there were many roadkills, particularly of robins. A check of several open and semi-open brooks in the South Peabody-Salem-Lynn area by Rick Heil revealed unprecedented concentrations of birds there. Twenty-nine Wood Ducks, seventeen Killdeer, and twenty-nine American Woodcock were noted in this survey; one woodcock was found dead. Of two Eastern Phoebes seen, one was picked up from the snow, barely alive; this bird died a few minutes later. The 260+ American Robins counted during the day were concentrated both along open brooks and in thickets of Staghorn Sumac and greenbrier that still had berries from last fall. Of these robins, fifty or more were moribund and nine were found dead.

Rick Heil also observed a male Rusty Blackbird feeding on the flesh of a dead robin. The chest cavity had been exposed, and it was apparent that much of the carcass had been consumed. The rusty fed for about two minutes, pecking off tiny bits of flesh. On the south shore, there were many reports of American Robins dead as well as Tree Swallows and a Little Blue Heron. In the Sudbury River Valley, traditional sites for Eastern Phoebes were devoid of birds after the storm although this species had been present earlier. American Robins totaled 443 on melted areas at Concord's Nine Acre Corner on April 9. Lillian Files of Tyngsboro (Massachusetts Bluebird Society) reported the very sad discovery of seventeen Eastern Bluebirds found dead.

Following the storm, on April 7 and 8, bird feeders were bustling with activity, and many Fox Sparrows were noted. R.S.H. and R.H.S.

LOONS THROUGH MERGANSERS

Red-necked Grebes accumulated in favored coastal spots with a maximum of 320 counted in Dennis. Horned Grebes were reported with many in breeding plumage which is a rare sight for most observers in this area except during this month. The Scituate Western Grebe, present since March 22, was last reported on April 4. Great Blue Herons were seen refurbishing nests at the heronry in Westboro where ten nests were occupied by April 3, and a pair was observed copulating on that date. Green Herons were first reported on the 19th as were Little Blues. Cattle Egrets appeared on the 16th as did Great Egrets, both in Marshfield, and a Louisiana Heron was seen on the same date in Chatham. An adult Yellow-crowned Night Heron was noted in Provincetown on the 18th.

Glossy Ibis were searching for food along a brook in Middleboro in the snow after the blizzard.

Two "Blue" Geese were first seen inland in Essex County and subsequently made their way to the coast. An all white duck was seen with two male Gadwall at Plum Island and was presumed to be of that species. Four European Wigeon were reported from three locations. The early April blizzard, as noted in the introduction, concentrated such species as Wood Duck with 29 counted in the South Peabody area, an unprecedented number according to the observer. Ring-necked Ducks continued throughout the month and Harlequin Ducks were present throughout on the vineyeard where a maximum of 12 were seen.

G.W.G.

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS
Common Loon:			
1;4	Marshfield; Scituate, P.I.	7; 3, 2	D.Clapp; SSBC, BBC
10,thr.	Manomet, Rockport	7, 7 migr.	G.Gove#, P.Stangel
Red-throated Loon:			
3;4,10,25	Scituate; P.I.	1; 2, 1, 1	BBC
Red-necked Grebe:			
3,4,11	Dennis	260, 320, 90	B.Nikula
4,10	Scituate, Manomet	17, 48	N.Komar#, G.Gove#
Horned Grebe:			
9,19	N.Scituate	20, 25	W.Petersen
4,10	Scituate, P.I.	17, 6	N.Komar#, BBC
Western Grebe (from March):			
3,4	Scituate	1	R.Campbell + v.o.
Pied-billed Grebe:			
3,4	6 from six loc., 2 at P.I.		v.o.
9,10,11	Duxbury, Lakeville, W.Bridgewater	2, 3, 1	K.Ryan,G.Gove#,W.Petersen
Gannet:			
3,4	Scituate, P.I.	6, 2	BBC
20	Ipswich	2	J.Berry
Great Cormorant:			
4	Scituate	94	N.Komar#
Double-crested Cormorant:			
3	Scituate, S.R.V., P.I.	1, 25, 1	BBC, R.Walton, E.Morrier
4	N.Scituate, P.I., Marshfield	18, 30, 90	N.Komar#, BBC, D.Clapp
15,24	Framingham, P.I.	100, 150	K.Ryan, BBC
Great Blue Heron:			
thr.	Westboro	20	v.o.
3	Scituate, Saugus	9, 3	BBC, C.Jackson
3	P.I., S.R.V.	5, 4	E.Morrier, R.Walton
5,9	Marshfield, N.Scituate	16, 6	D.Clapp, W.Petersen
Green Heron:			
19,20;25-27	Mt.A.; P.I.	2, 1; 2	R.Stymeist, BBC
Little Blue Heron:			
19,29-30	Chatham, Duxbury	1, 1	B.Nikula, W.Petersen
Cattle Egret:			
16-22	Marshfield	1-3	v.o.
18,30	Brewster, Nantucket	1, 1	R.Pyle, E.Andrews
Great Egret:			
16;25	Marshfield, Yarmouth; P.I.	1, 1; 1	W.+ B.Klunk, C.Smith;BBC
12,24	Chilmark	1	V.Laux#
Snowy Egret:			
3;4	Marshfield, P.I.; Scituate	4, 2; 7	BBC, E.Morrier; N.Komar#
16,18	Squantum, Weymouth	5, 12	D.Brown, BBC
24,25	Ipswich, P.I.	5, 2	BBC
Louisiana Heron:			
16,18-19	Chatham, WBWS	1, 1	B.Nikula#, C.Goodrich#
Black-crowned Night Heron:			
4,24	P.I.	3, 30	BBC, V.Albee
18,19	Weymouth, Saugus	2, 4	BBC, J.Berry
Yellow-crowned Night Heron:			
18	P'town	1 ad.	D.Reynolds#
American Bittern:			
1,10;11,16	P.I.; Squantum	1, 1; 1, 1	R.Heil, BBC; S.Smith, D.Brown
8,15	S.Peabody, GMNWR	1, 1	R.Heil, M.Noland
22,25	Marshfield, W.Newbury	1, 2	W.Petersen, BBC
Glossy Ibis:			
5;4;19,22	Chilmark; Marshfield	1; 6; 37, 45	W.Manter; N.Komar#; W.Petersen
18,27	P.I.	13, 58	R.Stymeist#, F.Bouchard

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBERS	OBSERVERS
Glossy Ibis (continued):			
9,22	Middleboro, Rowley	2, 32	D.Briggs, R.Heil
10-31	Cape Cod	9	v.o.
23,29	Scituate, Nant.	27, 1	D.Clapp, K.Coffin
Mute Swan:			
thr.	Ipswich	pr. on nest	J.Berry#
14	Acoaxet	115	W.+ B.Klunk
Canada Goose:			
thr.	P.I.	300-600	v.o.
Brant:			
2,4	Winthrop, Scituate	98, 77	F.Bouchard, N.Komar#
16,24	Squantum, Newbypt	222, 227	D.Brown, G.Gove
Snow Goose:			
4,10,24	P.I.	63, 100, 34	G.Gove, BBC, G.Gove#
3,4	GMNWR, Scituate	2, 1	H.Wiggin, N.Komar#
"Blue" Goose:			
11,18,24	W.Newbury, Newbypt-Scotland Rd., Newbypt Harbor	2 ad.	J.Soucy+ L.Jodrey,R.Stymeist#, G.Gove#
3,20	P.I., Newbypt	2, 2 ad.	E.Morrier#, W.Petersen
Black Duck:			
	P.I.-PRNWR	643	D.Spencer
Gadwall:			
4,22	P.I.	36, 10	G.Gove, D.Spencer
1-20,9	Ipswich, N.Scituate	5, 3	J.Berry, W.Petersen
4,14	Marston's Mills, W.Harwich	8, 10	B.Nikula
Pintail:			
3,22	P.I.	25, 11	E.Morrier, D.Spencer
Green-winged Teal:			
22,24	P.I., SRV	159, 31	D.Spencer, R.Walton
Blue-winged Teal:			
4;15	P.I.	7 m., 2 f.; 18	G.Gove; BBC
18,20	Marshfield, GMNWR	6, 4	D.Clapp, J.Carter
24	Ipswich	16	J.Berry
European Wigeon:			
1,4;3,19	Ipswich; Wayland	1 m.; 1 m., 1	J.Berry; J.Heywood#,BBC
18,24	E.Orleans, M.V.	1 m., 2 m.	A.Williams, V.Laux
American Wigeon:			
1,4	Ipswich	33, 20+	J.Berry
3,11	Scituate, W.Bridgewater	12, 6	BBC, W.Petersen
Northern Shoveler:			
4;22,24	P.I.	7 m., 2 f.; 3, 5	G.Gove; D.Spencer, BBC
19	Wayland	3	BBC
Wood Duck:			
3,8,10	Saugus, S.Peabody, SRV	3, 29, 19	C.Jackson,R.Heil,R.Walton
9-25	Duxbury	2-25(4/25)	K.Ryan
12,13	Easton, IRWS	5, 4	K.Ryan, BBC
Ring-necked Duck:			
1,3	W.Newbury, Middleboro	24, 75	R.Heil, W.Petersen
3	S.Hanson, SRV	115, 17	W.Petersen, R.Walton
4,11	Newbypt, W.Bridgewater	80, 60	BBC, W.Petersen
14,27	W.Peabody, Manchester	36, 13	R.Heil
17,17-19	W.Newbury, GMNWR	23, 26	BBC, G.Gove
Canvasback:			
10	Cambridge	1	BBC
Greater Scaup:			
2;4,10	Winthrop; Newbypt	160; 50, 20	F.Bouchard; BBC
Lesser Scaup:			
1,24	Newbypt	13, 1	R.Heil, BBC
Common Goldeneye:			
4	Scituate, Newbypt	20, 200+	SSBC, BBC
Barrow's Goldeneye:			
4-22	Newbypt	max. 3 m. + 4 f. on 4/11	v.o.
19,22	N.Scituate	1 m.	W.Petersen
Bufflehead:			
4,10	Newbypt	35, 20	BBC
2,4	Duxbury	30,20	K.Ryan, BBC
Oldsquaw:			
thr.	Newbypt	250+	BBC
Harlequin Duck:			
thr.	M.V.	max. 12	v.o.

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS
Common Eider:			
4,25	Scituate, P.I.	45, 40	SSBC, BBC
King Eider:			
10,19	Rockport, N.Scituate	1 ad. m., 1 f.	S.Smith, W.Petersen
White-winged Scoter:			
4	Scituate	15	SSBC
Surf Scoter:			
4	Scituate	50	SSBC
Black Scoter:			
4	P.I., Scituate	12 m. + 18 f., 5	G.Gove, SSBC
Ruddy Duck:			
2,4	Cambridge, P.I.	2, pr.	F.Bouchard, G.Gove
Hooded Merganser:			
3	Scituate, Medford; P.I.	1, 2; pr.	BBC; E.Morrier
11	Milton, Squantum, W.Bridgewater	1 f., pr., 12	P.O'Neil, S.Smith, W.Petersen
13,16	Cambridge, Duxbury	pr., 18	F.Bouchard, K.Ryan
Common Merganser:			
3	Lakeville, Medford	3, 7	W.Petersen, BBC
4,11	Lincoln, Wayland	8, 14	A.Ellis, E.Morrier
10,25	Newbypt, Duxbury	8, 11	BBC, K.Ryan
Red-breasted Merganser:			
4	P.I., Scituate	200, 45	BBC, SSBC
10,20	Manchester, Ipswich	23, 24	BBC, J.Berry

HAWKS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

Turkey Vultures are apparently increasing in eastern Massachusetts, at least during migration, with 32 reported from 25 locations, and one observer noted that it was the first time in the state in his experience that these birds had been seen perching together. An immature Cooper's Hawk was seen feeding on a pigeon in the Middlesex Fells. The hawk migration this spring was generally disappointing with no large numbers reported. Analysis of the weather patterns would undoubtedly explain this phenomenon although good numbers of kestrels were seen at coastal locations; 30 were counted at Plum Island in one hour on the first and 95 in Wellfleet in one hour on April 18. Ospreys were on nesting territory in several locations including at least 20 occupied nests in the Westport area and one inland pair in Lakeville although many apparently good inland locations were vacant. Two Peregrine Falcons were reported, both adults, and Ruffed Grouse were heard drumming on two occasions in Saugus.

As noted previously, woodcock may not have fared well in the blizzard; 29 were counted immediately after the storm including at least one dead in the Peabody-Lynn-Salem area. A record high count of 300 Snipe was reported from West Bridgewater, and large numbers were seen in other locations. According to one observer, these numbers probably reflect perfect conditions at the precise time of this species' migration rather than an unusually large population. Habitats where these birds were seen were wet or flooded corn fields. Solitary Sandpiper was first reported on April 3, Upland on the 19th and Spotted on April 24. Pectoral Sandpipers were present but in nothing like the unprecedented numbers of the spring of 1981. Least Sandpipers were noted on the early date of April 2. Two very early Stilt Sandpipers were reported at the end of the month at two locations, and three or four Ruffs, including one Reeve, were seen, one from Bridgewater and the rest in the Newburyport area. G.W.G.

Turkey Vulture:			
Thirty-two reported from 25 loc. from Ashburnham to Cape Cod by various observers.			
15	Quincy; Sudbury	11; 5	D.Brown;K.Ryan
17-19,25	Mt.Wachusett	6, 5	P.Roberts#
18	Milton	5	B.Petersen
Goshawk:			
11;17-19,25	Stoughton; Mt.Wachusett	1 ad.; 1, 1	R.Kikus; P.Roberts#
16;24	ONWR; W.Newbury, Lexington	1; 1 ad., 1 ad.	S.Carroll#;R.Heil,J.Andrews
Sharp-shinned Hawk:			
3,4	W.Bridgewater, S.Hanson	2, 1	W.Petersen, SSBC
9,19,24	Rockport, Wayland, Dover	1 f., 1, 1	P.Stangel, BBC, F.Hamlen
17-19,25	Mt.Wachusett	11, 9	P.Roberts#
17;18,19	Ashburnham; P.I.	4; 6, 17	R.Stymeist#; P.Roberts
24	SRV, Ipswich	2, 1	R.Walton, BBC
Cooper's Hawk:			
2,4	Bolton, Bridgewater	1, 1	M.Lynch#, SSBC

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS
Cooper's Hawk (continued):			
15	Winchester, Newton	1 imm., 1	G.Gove, N.Komar
16,18	W.Roxbury, W.Peabody	1, 1	M.Greenwald, R.Heil
Red-tailed Hawk:			
thr.	Ipswich	ad. on nest	J.Berry
11;17-19,25	Wayland; Mt.Wachusett	6; 3, 5	E.Morrier#,P.Roberts#,BBC
Twenty-one individuals reported from 10 locations.			
Red-shouldered Hawk:			
14,15	W.Peabody, Quincy	2 migr., 1	R.Heil, D.Brown
17-19,25	Mt. Wachusett	1, 1	P.Roberts#, BBC
24,27	Marshfield, M.V.	2, 1	W.Petersen, V.Laux
Broad-winged Hawk:			
17-19,25	Mt. Wachusett	74, 7	P.Roberts#, BBC
18	W.Peabody	9	R.Heil
Nineteen individuals reported from 10 locations.			
Rough-legged Hawk:			
10;17	P.I., Ipswich; P.I.	3, 2; 1	BBC
11,16;18,19	Marshfield; Chilmark	1, 1; 1, 1	D.Clapp, W.+ B.Klunk; V.Laux
Bald Eagle:			
23	Drumlin Farm W.S.	1	R.Forster
Northern Harrier:			
thr.	P.I.	max. 6	v.o.
5,11	Newton, Wayland	1, 2	N.Komar, E.Morrier
4	W.Bridgewater, Scituate	1, 1	SSBC
10,14	Hamilton, Salem	1 f., 1 f.	J.Berry#
25,29	Mt. Wachusett, Mt.A.	1, 1	BBC
Osprey:			
14,17-19	W.Peabody, Mt.Wachusett	8, 3	R.Heil, P.Roberts#
15	SRV	6	R.Forster
Nesting pairs reported from Lakeville (1 pr.), Wareham (1 pr.), and Westport.			
Twenty-five individuals reported from 11 locations.			
Peregrine Falcon:			
18;30	P'town; P.I., Medford	1 ad; 1 ad, 1	B.Nikula; C.Floyd#, C.Jackson
Merlin:			
16;17;18,19	ONWR; P.I.	1; 1; 4, 1	M.Lynch#; BBC; P.Roberts
17-19,30	Plum Island	1, 3	P.Roberts#,C.Floyd+ L.Taylor
American Kestrel:			
1;18,19	P.I.	30; 172, 43	R.Heil; P.Roberts
18	Wellfleet	95	B.Nikula
Ruffed Grouse:			
9,25	Sudbury	2, 1	K.Ryan
3+11	Saugus	1 drumming	C.Jackson
5	Newton	4	N.Komar
Bobwhite:			
3	Sudbury	2	H.Wiggin
Virginia Rail:			
24,28	Ipswich, W.Roxbury	1, 1	BBC, M.Greenwald
25	Wareham	1	D.Briggs#
Sora Rail:			
19,20	P.I., GMNWR	1, 1	S.Smith, J.Carter
24,30	Ipswich, W.Roxbury	2, 2	J.Berry, M.Greenwald
American Coot:			
15,20	GMNWR	2, 2	W.+ B.Klunk, J.Carter
Piping Plover:			
4,10	Scituate, P.I.	7, 1	N.Komar#, F.Hamlen#
Killdeer:			
4	SRV, Scituate, Marshfield	24, 14, 18	R.Walton,D.Clapp,N.Komar#
10	Manchester-Ipswich	16	BBC
	8 loc.	56	
Black-bellied Plover:			
4,22	Scituate, Duxbury	4, 8	SSBC, W.Petersen#
27	P.I.	25	F.Bouchard#
American Woodcock:			
2,4,5	Bolton, Newton, Saugus	4, 2, 1	M.Lynch#,N.Komar,C.Jackson
8	S.Peabody	29 (1 dead)	R.Heil
9;10	Ipswich; Cambridge, W.Newbury	1; 3, 1	W.Sumner; BBC
13,16	IRWS, Squantum	8, 7	BBC, D.Brown
Common Snipe:			
3,16	W.Bridgewater	85, 300	W.Petersen#
3,17	Bolton	35, 80	R.Stymeist#

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS
Common Snipe (continued):			
3,18	Marshfield	36, 28	BBC, D.Clapp
13-30	W.Roxbury	max. 46 (4/20)	M.Greenwald
11,25	Cambridge, SRV	6, 18	L.Taylor, R.Walton
Thirty-nine individuals reported from seven locations.			
Upland Sandpiper:			
19,24,29	Marshfield, Newbury, S.Natick	3, 5, 1	W.Petersen,L.Taylor,F.Hamlen
Spotted Sandpiper:			
24,28	Marblehead, Mt.A.	1, 1	R.Heil, M.Reinstein
Solitary Sandpiper:			
3,28	Topsfield, Edgartown	1, 1	R.Veit#, V.Laux#
Greater Yellowlegs			
3;4	Marshfield; Rowley, Newbypt	2; 6, 3	BBC; G.Gove, BBC
29	Newbypt	350+	R.Heil
Lesser Yellowlegs:			
3,4	W.Bridgewater	2, 6	W.Petersen, SSBC
17,19,22	Newbypt, Marshfield, P.I.	5, 6, 2	BBC,W.Petersen,D.Spencer
Purple Sandpiper:			
3,5	Scituate, Chilmark	250, 17	BBC, A.Brown
4,24	N.Scituate	325, 100+	N.Komar#, W.Petersen
Pectoral Sandpiper:			
1,3	Rowley, W.Bridgewater	5, 13	R.Heil, W.Petersen
4,22	Marshfield	7, 4	N.Komar#, W.Petersen#
17,18	Bolton, W.Newbury	2, 5	G.Gove#
24,28	Newbypt, IRWS	35, 13	R.Heil
Least Sandpiper:			
2,22	Bolton (well observed), Newbypt	4, 1	S.Carroll + M.Lynch, R.Heil
Dunlin:			
17,29	Newbypt	100, 450	BBC, R.Heil
Short-billed Dowitcher:			
23,29	Yarmouth, P.I.	5, 2	J.Aylward, R.Heil
Stilt Sandpiper:			
27,29	M.V., Newbypt	1, 1 (details)	V.Laux, R.Heil
Ruff:			
4;18,22	W.Bridgewater; W.Newbury	1 m.; 1 m., 1 m.	W.Petersen;G.Gove#,R.Heil
29	Newbypt Harbor	1 f.	R.Heil
Red Phalarope:			
7	Eastham	3	C.Goodrich

GULLS THROUGH GOATSUCKERS

A first winter Thayer's Gull in transitional plumage was carefully studied in Newburyport on April 22. The overall coloration of the bird was a uniform pale buff, paler than all nearby Herring Gulls. The outer 3-4 primaries were a pale creamy brown, much lighter than in similarly aged Herring Gulls. The primaries had pale tips and light areas on the inner webs forming the characteristic "J" markings. The flight feathers were creamy white beneath when observed in flight although the pale brownish areas on the upper surface of the primaries showed through when the bird wheeled. The resulting effect was not unlike the pattern of an Arctic Tern in that there was a narrow subterminal band of markings the length of the primaries. The tail band was solid and of the same pale color as the primaries and was narrower than that of a Herring Gull. Presumably the bird was nearly in first summer plumage, the basal half of the bill was already light colored, and the distal half was dark, the two tones fusing gradually. The mantle was scalloped with buffy brown, and the underparts were lightly spotted. The legs were flesh colored and the eye was dark.

A maximum of seven adult Little Gulls was present on April 29 in Newburyport Harbor. A Gull-billed Tern was reported on the 30th at Quaise, Nantucket, where the first Common Terns were noted on the same day.

Nine Black Guillemots were observed near Grave's Ledge in Boston Harbor, and a Common Puffin was noted in Cape Cod Bay on the 19th.

Great Horned Owls were reported nesting in many localities, and the one individual in the Dell at Mt.Auburn Cemetery became a familiar sight to many birders.

A Whip-poor-will arrived on April 26 at Mt. Auburn Cemetery, the same date of arrival that has been recorded there for nine years excluding one year when one was found dead beneath the tower on April 27. A Chuck-will's-widow was noted at Manomet on the 25th.

R.S.H. and R.H.S.

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS

GULLS THROUGH GOATSUCKERS

Glaucous Gull:			
4	P.I.	1 (2W)	G.Gove
Iceland Gull:			
4	P.I., E.Bridgewater	5, 1 imm.	BBC, SSBC
Great Black-backed x Herring Gull hybrid (details on file):			
13	S.Peabody	1 ad.	R.Heil
Thayer's Gull (excellent details on file):			
22	Newbypt	1 (1W-1S)	R.Heil
Ring-billed Gull:			
4	Bridgewater area, Newbypt area	350, 100+	SSBC, BBC
Little Gull:			
thr.	Newbypt	max. 7 ad. (4/29)	R.Heil# + v.o.
Gull-billed Tern:			
30	Nantucket (Quaise)	1	E.+ C.Andrews
Common Tern:			
30	Nantucket	12-15	D.Briggs, D.Davis
Black Guillemot:			
25	Boston Harbor (near Grave's Ledge)	9	W.Petersen#
Common Puffin:			
19	Cape Cod Bay	1	R.Prescott
Screech Owl:			
2	Bolton Flats	5	M.Lynch, S.Carroll
3	Hopedale, Lincoln	2, 4	T.Lipsky, R.Stymeist#
Great Horned Owl:			
thr.	Mt.A., Lexington (2 loc.)	1+, 2 pr. nesting	C.Jackson#+v.o.,L.Taylor#
3,19	Westboro, Rockport	pr. on nest, 2	R.Stymeist#, P.Stangel
Barred Owl:			
21	Carlisle	1	J.Rolfe
Short-eared Owl:			
4,10;14	E.Boston; P.I.	2; 1	C.Jackson; N.Komar#
14	S.Dartmouth	1	W.+ B.Klunk
Whip-poor-will:			
26	Mt.A.	1	L.Robinson#+v.o.
Chuck-will's-widow:			
25	Manomet	1	MBO staff

SWIFTS THROUGH MARTINS

The first Chimney Swifts arrived in small numbers by April 20, increasing at the end of the month. Maximum counts of migrating Common Flickers occurred during the third week of April. The Red-headed Woodpecker remained at Horn Pond, Woburn, all month. There were very few Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers noted during the month, and some of the reports were of birds that normally nest in those areas in north central Massachusetts.

The blizzard of April 6 had a very damaging effect on Eastern Phoebes with very few reported after the storm, and many observers noted that phoebes were missing from their traditional nesting locations. The storm had a similar effect on the numbers of Tree Swallows reported. This species did not appear again in good numbers until after April 21. Purple Martins returned to Plum Island on April 15. R.H.S.

Chimney Swift:			
20,22,28	Middleboro, Mt.A., Woburn	1, 1, 10	D.Briggs,F.Bouchard,G.Gove
Belted Kingfisher:			
thr.	1-2 ind. reported from many locations.		
Common Flicker:			
16,24	Squantum, Mt.A.	26, 9	D.Brown, M.Noland#
24,25	Ipswich, P.I.	10-12, 19	BBC, BBC
Pileated Woodpecker:			
11,19	Milton, Wayland	1, 1	P.O'Neil, BBC
21	Lincoln (DFWS), Carlisle	2, 2	R.Forster, J.Rolfe
Red-headed Woodpecker:			
thr.	Woburn (Horn Pond)	1	G.Gove + v.o.
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:			
16	Squantum, Mt.A.	2, 3	D.Brown, M.Noland#
17-25,19	Mt.Wachusett, Ashburnham	2+, 1	P.Roberts#, G.Gove#
25	Princeton	1	L.Taylor#
Eastern Kingbird:			
27	Dover	1	F.Hamlen

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS
Eastern Phoebe:			
2-20,3	Mt.A., Hopedale	max. 5 (4/3), 5	v.o., T.Lipsky
Very few reported after the April 6 snowstorm.			
Horned Lark:			
3,4	Halifax, W.Bridgewater	20, 10	W.Petersen, SSBC
Tree Swallow:			
1,2	Manomet, Duxbury	1, 25	MBO staff, K.Ryan
3	SRV, GMNWR	119, 40	R.Walton, H.Wiggin
3	S.Hanover, Middleboro	100, 100	W.Petersen
4	Wayland, P.I.	300, 10	E.Morrier#, BBC
Very few reported after the April 6 snowstorm until April 10.			
16,20	Duxbury, GMNWR	35, 50+	K.Ryan, J.Carter
21,24	S.Hanson, P.I.	800, 200	W.Petersen, BBC
Reports from many locations after April 24.			
Bank Swallow:			
18,21	W.Peabody, S.Hanson	2, 3	R.Heil, W.Petersen
28	Woburn (Horn Pond)	2	G.Gove
Rough-winged Swallow:			
15+17,18	GMNWR, S.Peabody	1 + 3, 2	M.Noland+v.o., R.Heil
18	Edgartown	1	V.Laux
19	Wayland, Marshfield	1, 1	C.Turin#, W.Petersen#
22,28	Rockport, Woburn	5, 4	P.Stangel, G.Gove
Barn Swallow:			
14;15	MBO, Wollaston; GMNWR	3, 1; 1	MBO,D.Brown;W.+ B.Klunk
19,28	Wayland, Woburn	6, 17	C.Turin#, G.Gove
Cliff Swallow:			
22,28	S.Hanson, Woburn	1, 2	W.Petersen#, G.Gove
Purple Martin:			
7,15 on	Middleboro, P.I.	4, 1-15	J.Steill#, R.Heil + v.o.
16,22	Squantum, Marshfield	1, 5	D.Brown, D.Clapp#
22	W.Newbury, Hanson	1, 5	R.Heil, W.Petersen#
18	Chilmark, M.V.	7	V.Laux, A.Brown#

CROWS THROUGH GNATCATCHERS

Reports of Fish Crows south of Boston continue to increase, and a pair was again building a nest at Mt.Auburn Cemetery. A Boreal Chickadee, obviously migrating back north, was found at Squaw Rock, Squantum.

The April 6-7 snowstorm took its toll of American Robins as revealed by the numbers reported dead or moribund, and remarkable numbers of this species appeared on snow-cleared areas after the storm. Unfortunately, many of the weakened robins died on plowed streets as they were probably unable to escape from moving vehicles.

Lillian Files of Tyngsboro reported a real tragedy among Eastern Bluebirds in her area after the blizzard. It had promised to be a good year for Lil Files and her Bluebird Trail project when seventeen arrived at the houses around March 19. After the April 6 snowstorm which dumped twenty inches of snow with winds gusting to 50 mph for three days, all seventeen birds were wiped out. Mrs. Files went out on skis to put out canned dog food, raisins, doughnuts, and sumac in her boxes--to no avail. On April 7 she found a male bluebird hiding in a garage for shelter, tried to force-feed it some dog food, but it died within an hour. She found two males and a female huddled together in a box frozen; another female was discovered just sitting frozen on a completed nest. Lillian Files is a board member of the North American Bluebird Society and offers a slide lecture program, "Bring Back the Bluebirds." If you are interested in information on how your community can start a Bluebird Trail Project, contact her at Scribner Hill, Tyngsboro, Massachusetts 01879, telephone: 617 692-2520.

An unprecedented flight of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers was reported this year with fourteen banded at Manomet, nine noted in one tree at Mt. Auburn, fifteen in Rockport and thirteen in Marshfield. Nest building was reported by the month's end at Boxford State Forest.

R.H.S.

Fish Crow:			
thr., 3	Mt.A., Halifax	pr. nesting, 5+	v.o., W.Petersen
16,21	Blue Hills, S.Hanson	10, 6	R.Campbell, W.Petersen
Boreal Chickadee:			
16	Squantum	1	D.Brown
House Wren:			
23,30	S.Peabody, W.Roxbury	1, 1	R.Heil, M.Greenwald

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS
Winter Wren:			
5 on, 10	Dover, Boxford	1-2, 1	F.Hamlen#, N.Komar#
13,16,24	S.Peabody, Squantum, Mt.A.	1, 1, 1	R.Heil,D.Brown,J.Barton#
Gray Catbird:			
19,29-30	Manomet, Mt.A.	1 (b), 1-3	MBO staff, v.o.
Brown Thrasher:			
7,20	Cohasset, Mt.A.	1, 1	E.Phillips, J.Heywood
24,25	P.I., S.Natick	1, 1	BBC, F.Hamlen
27,28	Woburn, W.Roxbury	3, 3	G.Gove, M.Greenwald
American Robin:			
4	Whitman, Newbypt area	55, 250+	SSBC, BBC
3,9	SRV	128, 433	R.Walton
11,18	Marshfield	140, 380	D.Clapp
Hermit Thrush:			
14	Newton, Brookline	1, 1	O.Komar, J.Paputsiano
15,16	SRV, Squantum	1, 11	R.Walton, D.Brown
16-30,19	Mt.A., N.Scituate	1-6 max. 4/19, 4	v.o., W.Petersen
Other reports of single individuals from seven locations.			
Eastern Bluebird:			
2	Middleboro (2 loc.)	1, 2	fide D.Briggs
14,19+26	Wollaston, Rockport	2, 2+1	D.Brown, P.Stangel
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:			
16-30,17-30	MBO, Mt.A.	14 b., max. 9 4/23	MBO staff,R.Stymeist+v.o.
17;19	P.I.; Rockport, ONWR	1, 15, 2	BBC; P.Stangel, M.Lynch#
19,20	Marshfield, Boxford	2, 1	W.Petersen#
20	P'town, WBWS	3, 2	B.Nikula#
22,23	Marshfield, Rockport	13, 8	W.Petersen, V.Albee
This was an unprecedented flight; there were reports from most everywhere.			

KINGLETS THROUGH WARBLERS

Golden-crowned Kinglets completed migration through our area by the third week of the month, about the same time the maximum counts of Ruby-crowned Kinglets were recorded. A few reports of Water Pipits were sent in with as many as 25 in West Bridgewater on the 4th. The only Cedar Waxwings noted were found in Rockport on the 14th. An adult Northern Shrike was found in Newton on the first, and a Loggerhead Shrike was reported from Fort Hill in Eastham.

A White-eyed Vireo was found April 24 on Plum Island, the early date for north of Boston. A Yellow-throated Vireo was banded at Manomet on the 26th, and the first Solitary Vireos arrived at mid-month.

The first southwest wind of the month was recorded on the 16th, and with the wind came the first reports of Black-and-whites, Yellow-rumps, Pines, Palms, and Louisiana Waterthrushes. Southwest winds on April 25-27 blew in much more of the above and two Prothonotaries, Northern Parula, a very early Tennessee, Prairies, Northern Waterthrushes and a Hooded at Squantum. As it turned out, this was the last time we had a southwest wind until May 19. R.H.S.

Golden-crowned Kinglet:			
2,4	Duxbury, Framingham	5, 2	K.Ryan, E.Morrier
16,17	Mt.A., P.I.	5, 2	R.Stymeist, BBC
Ruby-crowned Kinglet:			
10 on,15	Mt.A., SRV	max. 24+ 4/18, 2	v.o., R.Walton
15;16	Braintree; Newton, Duxbury	1; 3, 24	R.Campbell; O.Komar, K.Ryan
16,18	Squantum, Ipswich	12, 3	D.Brown, J.Berry
Many other reports of 1-3 individuals after the 18th.			
Water Pipit:			
1, 4	W.Newbury, W.Bridgewater	5, 25	R.Heil, SSBC
18,23	Newbypt, Bolton	1, 3	R.Stymeist#, M.Lynch#
Cedar Waxwing:			
14	Rockport	9	P.Stangel
Northern Shrike:			
1	Newton	1 ad.	N.Komar
Loggerhead Shrike:			
18	Eastham (Fort Hill)	1	C.Goodrich
White-eyed Vireo:			
24	P.I.	1	S.Sweet + L.Taylor#
Yellow-throated Vireo:			
26	Manomet	1 (b.)	MBO staff

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS
Solitary Vireo:			
16,17-30	Squantum, Mt.A.	1, max. 3	D.Brown, v.o.
17,21	Bourne, Winchester	1, 1	D.Briggs#, G.Gove
Black-and-white Warbler:			
17,19	Mt.Wachusett, WBWS	2, 1	P.Roberts#, D.Reynolds
22,22-30	Winchester, Mt.A.	1, max. 6	G.Gove, J.Heywood# + v.o.
Prothonotary Warbler:			
26,29	Mt.A., Squantum	1, 1	L.Robinson, D.Brown
Tennessee Warbler:			
26	Oak Bluffs (M.V.)	1	S.Whiting + B.Pesch
Northern Parula:			
25	Middleboro	1	D.Briggs
Yellow-rumped Warbler:			
3,4	Clinton, Framingham	1, 1	R.Stymeist#, E.Morrier#
17 on,19	Mt.A., Wayland	max. 50+ (4/25), 10	v.o., C.Turin#
Black-throated Green Warbler:			
24,30	Boxford, Mt.A.	3, 1	L.Taylor#, F. Bouchard
Yellow-throated Warbler:			
27	Lynn	1	R.Heil
Pine Warbler:			
2	Plymouth, Duxbury	1, 1	B.Sorrie, K.Ryan
16-25,17	Mt.A., Belmont	1-2, 1	M.Noland# + v.o., BBC
22;23	Taunton; Dover, S.Peabody	1; 1, 2	J.Sweeney; F.Hamlen, R.Heil
Prairie Warbler:			
26,27	Manomet, MNWS	1 (b.), 1	MBO, R.Heil
Palm Warbler:			
11,12-30	Squantum, Mt.A	1, 1-35 (max. 4/25)	S.Smith, v.o.
16-30	S.Peabody	max. 19 (4/27) incl. 1 "western"	R.Heil
19,24	Wayland, Lexington	12, 6	C.Turin#, J.Andrews
Northern Waterthrush:			
25-30;26,27	Mt.A.; S.Peabody, Nahant	1-2; 1, 2	v.o.; R.Heil
Louisiana Waterthrush:			
17 on,19	Boxford, Mt.A.	1-2, 1	A.Blaisdell+v.o.;H.D'Entremont#
24	Dover	2	F.Hamlen
Common Yellowthroat:			
27	Nahant	1	R.Heil
Hooded Warbler:			
29	Squantum	1	D.Brown

MEADOWLARK THROUGH SNOW BUNTINGS

A very early Northern Oriole was observed at Boxford State Forest on April 11, when southwest winds were gusting to 30 mph. There were no others reported during the month although they normally arrive in small numbers by the end of April. Rusty Blackbirds were seen through the end of the month with most reports before the 15th. An early Scarlet Tanager was reported from Martha's Vineyard on April 29, and Indigo Buntings were noted in five locations. A Dickcissel in Mt. Auburn Cemetery was a pleasant discovery there in the spring.

Pine Siskins were presumed nesting in many areas with actual nesting recorded at Mt. Auburn and in Dover. There were many reports of Red Crossbills throughout the month, and good numbers of Fox Sparrows were noted, especially after the snowstorm when they gathered at feeding stations.

R.H.S.

Eastern Meadowlark:			
3	Bolton, Marshfield	5, 2	J.Heywood#, BBC
Northern Oriole:			
11(early)	Boxford	1	A.Blaisdell
Rusty Blackbird:			
3,5,8	SRV, Newton, Brookline	19, 3, 2	R.Walton, N.Komar, H.Wiggin
16;26	Mt.A.; P.I., Rockport	2; 2, 3	R.Stymeist; F.Bouchard, P.Stangel
Scarlet Tanager:			
29(early)	Oak Bluffs (M.V.)	1	A.+ E.Brown
Indigo Bunting:			
18,19	Dennis, Chatham	1, 1	fide D.Reynolds, T.Vose
22,23	W.Tisbury (M.V.)	1	E.Waldren
26,30	Nantucket (2 locales)	1, 2	B.Walker, E.Andrews
Dickcissel:			
24	Mt.A.	1	I.Giriunas + v.o.

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS
Evening Grosbeak:			
thr.,16	Middleboro, ONWR	15-25/day, 12	D.Briggs, M.Lynch#
Purple Finch:			
3	Weston	11	R.Stymeist#
Common Redpoll:			
3,8	Whitman, Lynn	2, 1	W.Petersen, R.Heil
Pine Siskin:			
thr.,	Mt.A., Middleboro	max. 15 (nesting?), 4	v.o., D.Briggs
10,19	W.Newbury, Dover	1, nesting	BBC, F.Hamlen
Red Crossbill:			
2,16+19	Plymouth, Lynn	6, 2 + 12	B.Sorrie, R.Heil
15, 27	Lexington, W.Tisbury (M.V.)	2, 7	D.Borison#, W.Manter
Rufous-sided Towhee:			
18,25-30	Manomet, Mt.A.	1, max. 4	MBO, v.o.
27	P.I.	13	F.Bouchard
Savannah Sparrow:			
3,11	Bridgewater, Marshfield	6, 1	S.Higginbotham, D.Clapp
13,19,23	Newton, Braintree, Bolton	4, 15, 12+	O.Komar, G.Wilson, M.Lynch#
25;30	P.I., SRV; W.Roxbury	17, 12; 10	BBC, R.Walton; M.Greenwald
Vesper Sparrow:			
4	West Tisbury (M.V.)	1	V.Laux
16,19	Newton, Rockport	2, 3	O.Komar, P.Stangel
Tree Sparrow:			
3,30	Sudbury, Mt.A.	15, 1	R.Stymeist#, J.Barton
Chipping Sparrow:			
17,23-30	Dover, Mt.A.	1, max. 10 (4/30)	F.Hamlen, v.o.
Field Sparrow:			
16,22	Newton, W.Roxbury	4, 5	O.Komar, M.Greenwald
Fox Sparrow:			
1,4,5	Rowley, W.Newbury, Newton	13, 3, 8	R.Heil, BBC, N.Komar
7	Concord, Wollaston, Brookline	4, 2, 12	R.Walton, W.Cornwell, H.Wiggin
8	Brighton, Brookline, Carlisle	5, 8, 14+	J.Paputsiano,H.Wiggin,J.Davis
13,15	S.Peabody, Mt.A.	11, 16	R.Heil, R.Stymeist
Other reports of one to five individuals came from many locations.			
Swamp Sparrow:			
16,17-30	Squantum, W.Roxbury	6, max. 8 (4/30)	D.Brown, M.Greenwald
Song Sparrow:			
3,4,13	SRV, P.I., Cambridge	37, 12, 25	R.Walton, BBC, F.Bouchard
Lapland Longspur:			
4	W.Bridgewater	1	SSBC
Snow Bunting:			
16	ONWR	1 br. pl.	M.Lynch + S.Carroll

List of Abbreviations

ad.	adult	E.P.	Eastern Point, Gloucester
alt.	alternate (plumage)	F.E.	First Encounter Beach, Eastham
b.	banded	F.H.	Fort Hill, Eastham
br.	breeding	F.M.	Fowl Meadow
dk.	dark (phase, morph)	M.V.	Martha's Vineyard
f.	female	Mt.A.	Mt.Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge
fl.	fledge	Nant.	Nantucket
imm.	immature	Newbypt	Newburyport
ind.	individuals	P.I.	Plum Island
loc.	locations	P'town	Provincetown
lt.	light (phase, etc.)	R.P.	Race Point, Provincetown
m.	male	S.N.	Sandy Neck, Barnstable
max.	maximum	Stellw.	Stellwagen Bank
migr.	migrating	BBC	Brookline Bird Club
ph.	photographed	BOEM	Bird Observer of Eastern Massachusetts
pl.	plumage	DFWS	Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary
pr.	pair	GMNWR	Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge
thr.	throughout	IRWS	Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary
v.o.	various observers	MBO	Manomet Bird Observatory
W	winter (2W = second winter)	MNWS	Marblehead Neck Wildlife Sanctuary
w/	with	ONWR	Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge
yg.	young	PRNWR	Parker River National Wildlife Refuge
#	additional observers	SSBC	South Shore Bird Club
A.A.	Arnold Arboretum	SRV	Sudbury River Valley
A.P.	Andrews Point, Rockport	TASL	Take a Second Look (BOEM project)
C.Cod	Cape Cod	WBWS	Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary

BIRD OBSERVER PELAGIC TRIPS

Bird Observer will sponsor two pelagic trips this summer. The first trip will be Sunday, July 25, aboard the Yankee, from Harwichport to the vicinity of Pollock Rip. The cost of this trip will be $20 for subscribers and $25 for others.

Our second trip will be aboard the Captain John and Son, and is scheduled for Saturday, August 28, from Plymouth leaving at 4:30 A.M. and returning about 6:00 P.M. Our destination will be the Cox's Ledge area of Nantucket Shoals. This will be a unique opportunity to observe seabirds in the productive waters southwest of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. In late summer, water temperatures are considerably warmer here than north of Cape Cod, thus attracting certain pelagic species which require these conditions. Audubon's Shearwater and South Polar Skua are possibilities in addition to most of the more regularly observed species with the remote chance of an albatross. There is a greater chance to observe a good variety of fish and marine mammals than on more traditional Stellwagen Bank trips. Wayne Petersen will provide narration and information while at sea. If you have any questions about this trip, contact Wayne at 22 Hutchinson Terrace, Whitman, MA 02382. The price of this trip is $30 for subscribers and $35 for others.

Reservations for these trips can be made by sending your check payable to Herman D'Entremont,
358 Tappan Street
Brookline, MA 02146.

AT A GLANCE

Field identification has long been touted as an essential tool for the ornithologist whether he is investigating bird populations in distant lands, working on an avian ethology project, censusing birds on a breeding plot, studying migration, or building a large life or local bird list. In every case, the correct recognition of the bird species involved is critical to the precision necessary to have the effort be of both scientific and personal value.

In Massachusetts there is a long tradition of skilled field ornithologists dating back to the days of C. J. Maynard, William Brewster, C. W. Townsend, and Ludlow Griscom. Griscom, who has been called "the virtuoso of field identification," perhaps more than anyone, set a standard for field identification that is still used as a measuring stick today. As the precursor to Roger Tory Peterson's first field guide, Griscom successfully provided the interface needed to make the transition between the shotgun ornithologists of the last century and the modern binocular-wielding experts of today.

Many contemporary Massachusetts birders can still recall intimate contacts with Griscom and his standards of excellence. Yet, as with any area of study, new information, better field guides, better optics, increased mobility, and an increasing army of observers have all tended to produce a new corps of highly skilled observers, many of whom now possess skills matching or eclipsing those of the earlier masters.

Since much of the information and many of the field identification tricks amassed by this new army of experts are not yet between the covers of a single field guide, the neophyte birder of today has difficulty in gaining access to this new information unless he is in touch with these experts directly or is able to read the ever-growing ornithological literature with regularity.

The record compilers and the staff of Bird Observer of Eastern Massachusetts are increasingly aware of the frustration that often occurs over certain field identification situations that develop within the area covered by this journal. These frustrations result for various reasons, ranging from inadequate looks at particular birds to a lack of experience by the observers involved. In some cases, incomplete field guide information does not readily allow a correct identification to be made under field conditions. Some of these identification problems may never be resolvable due to an inadequate observation or to an incomplete observational record at the time of a particular bird-birder encounter. Nonetheless, many such troublesome encounters can be avoided if birders have as much pertinent information at their disposal as is possible.

It is with these facts in mind that "At A Glance" will become a regular feature in future issues of Bird Observer of Eastern Massachusetts. The column will include photos and field problems that are apt to be encountered in eastern Massachusetts or that have knowingly generated controversy at one time or another. Tips on solving such field problems, along with information that will be helpful to readers identifying such species in the future, will be provided by various local experts. Readers are invited to submit requests or high quality photographs that would be appropriate for this column.

AT A GLANCE - PHALAROPES

by Wayne R. Petersen, Whitman

Seabirds frequently cause identification problems. Their habitat often makes observation difficult and distance can result in imperfect views that are inadequate for specific identification. Storm-petrels, phalaropes, jaegers, and large alcids all exemplify this situation. Of these, the two pelagic phalarope species, Red Phalarope (Phalaropus fulicarius) and Northern Phalarope (P. lobatus), are notorious.

Phalaropes at sea are frequently seen only in flight or in small flocks riding buoyantly on the waves, often in the vicinity of floating seaweed or slicks on the ocean's surface. Off the Massachusetts coast, both species pass northward in April and May and southward in August and September. Records suggest that Red Phalaropes occur later in the fall than northerns, and it is likely that any phalarope seen after mid-October is a red. The pelagic distribution of the two species differs as well: Red Phalaropes show a greater tendency to migrate and concentrate farther offshore, e.g., Georges Bank, while Northern Phalaropes are the dominant species inshore and on near-shore fishing banks, e.g., Stellwagen Bank.

In breeding (alternate) plumage, both species are very distinctive and are adequately depicted in the standard field guides. In winter (basic) plumage, juvenile plumage, or in molting individuals, identification can be more critical. From a structural standpoint, the Red Phalarope is slightly larger and noticeably chunkier when seen afloat with Northern Phalaropes. Red Phalaropes appear thick-necked and heavy-chested and their bills are slightly longer than those of Northern Phalaropes. Red Phalarope bills are also thicker basally and somewhat blunt-tipped, quite unlike the needle-like bills of Northern Phalaropes. The yellowish base typical of spring-plumaged Red Phalaropes is apparently lost very quickly so that by mid-summer most individuals have entirely dusky bills, a feature that is seemingly true for juveniles as well.

Perhaps most useful for the identification of nonbreeding-plumaged birds is the pattern and coloration of the back. In Red Phalaropes, full basic-plumaged adults exhibit a pale gray back devoid of streaking or bicolored feather edging. This is in marked contrast to the darker, slaty-backed appearance of Northern Phalaropes. Northerns possess light stripes on the back due to white or golden feather fringes on the otherwise blue-gray mantle. Thus, in a mixed flock of floating phalaropes, basic-plumaged reds will stand out in contrast to the darker and streaked Northern Phalaropes. Molting birds can exhibit a mottled appearance which in Red Phalaropes can be suggestive of the streaked appearance of the Northern Phalarope. This effect, however, results not so much from white or golden fringing, but rather is caused by a mixture of old alternate feathers and new basic feathers. In such birds, structure, shape, and comparison with nearby birds of known identity can be helpful.

The juveniles of both species are distinctive. Juvenile Northern Phalaropes are very dark on the back and possess conspicuous golden fringes on the back feathers which form stripes. They are often buffy about the upper chest and throat, too. Red Phalaropes in a corresponding plumage are darker backed than adults, tending to be brownish-black with buffy feather edging. As in Northern Phalaropes, there is usually a buffy wash on the chest and sometimes on the sides of the rump as well.

Photo by Alan Brady

In addition to the distinctive back patterns, both species show a dusky eye patch and a corresponding crown patch that occasionally extends down the back of the neck. In Red Phalaropes these dusky markings are frequently lighter and less extensive. Northern Phalaropes always have prominent and extensive eye patches and very dark crowns. Any phalarope looking pale on the head is a good candidate for a red.

Red Phalaropes have considerably longer wings than northerns; thus, when afloat, they often appear both long and high astern much like a tiny Bonaparte's Gull (Larus philadelphia). Northern Phalaropes tend to ride lower astern, giving the appearance of more of the bird in the water.

In flight, identification can be difficult at a distance. At close range, Northern Phalaropes show a more contrasting white wing stripe, as well as the aforementioned back stripe Red Phalaropes look similar to basic-plumaged Sanderlings (Calidris alba).

Given the facts above, it should be apparent that the birds in the accompanying photograph are Red Phalaropes. These individuals, photographed by Alan Brady on Stellwagen Bank in mid-August, 1981, appear to the author to be adults. The upper bird is in nearly full basic plumage while the lower bird appears to be an adult in molt from alternate to basic plumage. For readers interested in additional information, the following references are suggested:

Finch, D. W., W. C. Russell, and E. V. Thompson. 1978. Pelagic Birds in the Gulf of Maine. American Birds 32: 281-294.

Powers, K. D. 1981. Marine Seabird Research. Manomet Bird Observatory Newsletter, November 1981: 2-9.

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Stallcup, R. W. 1976. Pelagic Birds of Monterey Bay, California. Western Birds 7: 113-136.

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At a Glance . . .

Photo by Dr. Alfred O. Gross *Courtesy of Massachusetts Audubon Society*

Can you identify this bird?
Identification will be discussed in next issue's *At a Glance.*

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